

Silicon Times Report
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The Publisher, Staff & Editors

Florida Lotto - LottoMan v1.35

Results: 01/24/98: three of six numbers with no matches

From the Editor's Desk...

For those of you who have enjoyed the header selections and smaller sizes of the STE version of STReport.. We now are using the shipping version of the NEW Acrobat PDF maker for Word. It uses Distiller 3.02 and Acrobat 3.01. It is in the Acrobat 3.0+ format. This newer version allows for smaller file sizes that are of the same size as earlier issues content wise. You may, from time to time, see some weird colors with certain graphics. I am working on devising a uniformity code. At this time the best I can come up with is to ask for high quality graphics submissions (no jpg) and we'll worry about the file size.

Acrobat is the best electronic paper there is out there and its been doing a wonderful job for us thus far. Now, with indexing and jump to highlights (part of the new reader v3.01) you'll soon see why the changes are for the better. The latest version of Acrobat Reader Acrobat Reader is available on our Web Site, Adobe's Web Site and our FTP Site. Get it.. You will not be sorry.

Ralph...

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LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Weekly Happenings in the Computer World

Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Compaq Bids to Acquire Digital

Compaq Computer Corp. is bidding to acquire Digital Equipment Corp. of Maynard, Massachusetts, for \$9.6 billion. The story broke Monday morning on CNNfn, the Cable News Network's financial service, and was quickly confirmed by the Dow Jones news service, which reports the Texas personal computer maker has entered a definitive agreement to acquire DEC. "Under the terms of the transaction," says Dow Jones, "shareholders of Digital

will receive \$30 in cash and about 0.945 a common share of Compaq for each share of Digital stock.

Compaq will issue about 150 million common shares and \$4.8 billion of cash." United Press International notes the merger, which still needs the approval of stockholders and regulators, would create the second largest computing company in the world. Financial problems at Digital have been evident for a while. As reported earlier, for instance, the company last November agreed to sell its troubled computer-network hardware business to Cabletron Systems Inc. for \$430 million in cash, stock and product credits. Digital last week cut prices on its desktop PC line by 12 percent to 20 percent.

Compaq, DEC Deal Hailed

Ultimately, watch for little resistance from federal regulators to Compaq Computer Corp.'s pricey \$9.6 billion pact to acquire Digital Equipment Corp., say Wall Street arbitragers, though they do expect the deal to get intense antitrust scrutiny. As reported earlier, Compaq has entered a definitive agreement to acquire Massachusetts-based DEC. Following up, the Reuter News Service says Wall Street analysts expect the Federal Trade Commission to request additional information on the deal but see the merger closing in three to four months.

"The combination," adds the wire service, "will spell the end of an independent DEC, an early pioneer in the computer industry now recovering from missteps made in the in the early 1990s." Requesting anonymity, one expert told Reuters the FTC likely will seek additional information, but he sees the deal as "pro-competitive" because DEC's 64-bit Alpha chip "now has a more viable future than it did beforehand."

Added the source, "As is typical, Compaq did not release a lot of information on the deal, synergies or financial analysis, so there will be a lot of uncertainty until the deal closes, but the Tandem transaction seemed to go pretty smoothly." (As reported, Compaq acquired Tandem Computers Inc. last year for more than \$4 billion.) The source said, "DEC would have had a very hard go without doing a transaction as time went on. I see the deal going through without a lot of hiccups." A second source added, "Our analyst likes the deal, though he thinks the price was a little high. It looks like a three- to four-month, straightforward deal."

Microsoft Says It Won't Settle

Don't look for Microsoft Corp. to seek a final settlement of the Justice Department's antitrust lawsuit, despite some surprise concessions this week. As reported, Microsoft surprised some observers by agreeing to offer the latest version of its Windows 95 operating system without requiring easy access to its Internet Explorer software, thus avoiding contempt of court. However, United Press International quotes Microsoft chief operating officer Bob Herbold as saying his employer is not considering a final settlement.

UPI notes yesterday's partial settlement "leaves the heart of the government's antitrust suit intact," adding, "In that case the Justice Department charges the company with antitrust violations growing out of its inclusion of the Internet browser with Windows 95." Meanwhile, Microsoft is appealing U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson's order that the company may not force computer makers to install the Internet browser software as a condition of licensing the Windows 95 operating system.

PC Makers Not Bolting Microsoft

Despite new legal and economic incentives for them to switch from Microsoft Corp.'s software for browsing the Internet, personal computer makers don't seem to be bolting for the door. On the contrary, several large PC companies have told business writer David E. Kalish of The Associated Press they have no plans to drop Microsoft's Internet Explorer, even though the company agreed last week to let them erase the browser software from computer screens. Kalish adds, "The PC makers also said that Netscape's decision that same day to give away its Navigator browser for free -- matching Microsoft's giveaway of its Internet Explorer-- was not enough to sway them."

Editor Note:

While Microsoft's IE 4.01 (the complete package) is free... Netscape is only offering the skeletal package for free. To legally obtain the complete Netscape package one MUST PAY. Netscape is STILL charging for it. \$27.00 ...RFM

"Analysts said the industry intransigence was a sign Microsoft's power and influence in the computer market has scarcely waned despite its concession in the government's antitrust case," he reports. AP finds PC makers unconvinced that offering Netscape's browser could attract enough new computer customers to offset several potential downsides. "After furiously streamlining their systems for making and selling PCs to cut costs," says the wire service, "the manufacturers are hesitant to complicate those processes and possibly drive up costs by switching to another browser."

U.S. Split on Microsoft Control

Microsoft Corp.'s dominant role in the computer software industry is good for consumers, say 46 percent of Americans responding to a new Time Magazine/CNN. However, in the same survey, 45 percent say they think it would be bad for consumers if Microsoft were to become the dominant company providing Internet services.

United Press International reports these additional poll results:

- ' 32 percent agree the government should take steps to reduce Microsoft's advantage over other computer companies, while 51 percent think it should not.
- ' Only 28 percent say Microsoft's dominance in the computer industry is due mostly to the quality of its software, while 42 percent say its sheer size makes it dominant. Thirty percent say they are not sure.

Microsoft Brings a Dozen Suits

A dozen lawsuits against computer resellers in the New York City, Boston and San Francisco areas have been filed by Microsoft Corp., alleging the defendants installed unlicensed software and distributed counterfeit Microsoft products. Microsoft officials told The Associated Press the suits stem from a campaign launched by the company last year aimed at stopping "hard disk loading," or the installation of pirated software on computers sold to customers.

Filed in U.S. district courts for the eastern and southern districts of New York, district of Massachusetts, and northern district of California, the suits all allege copyright and trademark infringement of Microsoft products, including the Windows and MS-DOS operating systems and Office

business software. In the California cases, Microsoft said, all defendants except Umiracle had previously settled with Microsoft for similar illegal activities.

AP reports Microsoft said it filed the lawsuits after investigating 17 companies in New York, 23 in California and 17 in Massachusetts. During the investigation, Microsoft alleged, personal computers were bought from the defendants that contained unauthorized software.

Those named in the New York lawsuits include:

- '• Prime Computers Inc. of New York City;
- '• Brooklyn Computer Center, also known as Eastern Micro and Golden Technology Distribution Corp. of Brooklyn;
- '• Century Computer, also known as Five Star Computer Corp. of Flushing.

California suites were filed against:

- '• Umiracle Microsystems Inc. of Fremont;
- '• Hitron Systems of Santa Clara;
- '• Multi-Function Concept Computer Systems Inc., doing business as MCC Systems of San Jose; Distar Inc. of San Jose;
- '• Songtech International Inc. of Fremont;
- '• MIT Inc., doing business as Laitron Computers of San Jose.

Massachusetts suits were filed against:

- '• MCS, doing business as Bits and Chips of Whitman;
- '• Perfect PC Inc. of Newton;
- '• Advanced Communications Technology Inc. of Natick.

AP reports Microsoft also says it reached settlements with nine other companies in the Boston area.

AOL Targets More Spammers

America Online Inc. continued its fight against unsolicited junk e-mail last week when it filed suit against two Michigan firms charged with the transmission of thousands of unsolicited messages to AOL members. The suit, filed on Jan. 22, 1998 in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, seeks an injunction to prevent the companies from "persistently aggravating AOL members with junk e-mail." The suit also seeks damages from both companies, which are reportedly owned and operated by the same individuals.

The companies named in the suit are LCGM Inc. and Web Promo Inc., both of Madison Heights, Michigan. America Online charges in its suit that LCGM and Web Promo violated federal and state laws by repeatedly spamming AOL members with advertisements from a myriad of Internet domains, including "live-video-sex.com," "pornjunkie.com," "hot-sex.com" and "xxxratedsex.com." AOL says that while it demanded that both companies stop sending unsolicited bulk e-mail, the companies persisted in using deceptive techniques to circumvent AOL's e-mail filtering technology.

The suit also alleges that LCGM Inc. and Web Promo Inc. forged references to AOL's domain name "aol.com" in their junk e-mail. AOL says the use of forged references to "aol.com" is designed to hinder its ability to detect and filter unwanted e-mail. The unauthorized use of "aol.com" by spammers is also designed to mislead AOL members into believing that the junk e-mail originates from AOL, and that AOL condones or tolerates it, says the online service.

The suit also targets the practice of including hypertext links to

pornographic Web sites in junk e-mail. The e-mails with hypertext links, which are sent indiscriminately to AOL members regardless of age, provide direct access to pornographic Web sites. The suit alleges that LCGM and Web Promo have made extensive use of this practice.

TI Buys Dialogic Unit

Texas Instruments Inc. has agreed to buy Spectron Microsystems from Dialogic Corp. The Dallas firm says expects the purchase price to range from \$20 to \$26 million, though specific terms are subject to closing adjustments. The Reuter News Service notes Spectron makes and sells advanced system software, such as real-time operating systems for use in digital signal-processing applications, adding, "Digital signal processors are powerful, specialized semiconductors that are used in a variety of electronic end-equipment such as cellular phones, modems and hard disk drives."

Netscape Reports Wider Loss

As its battle with Microsoft Corp. continues to take its toll, web browser pioneer Netscape Communications Corp. has posted a wider loss than expected for the fourth quarter. Writing in The Wall Street Journal this morning, reporter Don Clark quotes the Mountain View, California, company as saying the quarter loss was \$82.3 million, or 92 cents a share on a diluted basis, compared with net income of \$8.2 million, or nine cents a share, for the year-earlier period. The per-share figures are the same on a basic and diluted basis.

Clark adds that excluding restructuring charges and other one-time items, Netscape's loss was \$20.77 million, or 22 cents a share, compared with its Jan. 5 estimate of a loss of 15 cents to 19 cents a share and analysts' consensus of a loss of 16 cents a share. Netscape's revenue rose 9 percent to \$125.3 million from \$115.2 million, but, says Clark, "most of that increase came from the company's popular Web site and other services; revenue from selling software products declined 11 percent to \$85.7 million."

Changes are in the wind for Netscape:

- ' • As reported earlier (GO OLT-198), Netscape said last week it will follow Microsoft's lead and give away its browser software, along with the source code that could help other programmers enhance the product.
- ' • It also has reduced its work force.
- ' • And it has decided to scale back part of its investment in Java, the Sun Microsystems Inc. technology that first became popular because of its inclusion in the Netscape browser. Instead of updating that code in the future, Netscape has decided to let Sun and International Business Machines Corp. supply the internal software needed to play Java programs.

As a result of its moves, Netscape CEO Jim Barksdale told the paper the company is "well positioned to return to profitability in 1998."

Compaq, Radio Shack Ink Deal

Compaq Computer Corp. and RadioShack have signed a multi-year retail sales and service agreement that calls for Compaq Presario PCs to become the

exclusive computer line sold through RadioShack stores. Under the terms of the agreement, beginning in March, Compaq and RadioShack will jointly market and promote a unique line of specially configured Compaq Presario computers and accessories. In addition, Compaq will authorize RadioShack as an official service provider for its entire line of Compaq computers. A statement issued by the companies notes that Compaq and RadioShack will invest in the development of a store-within-a-store concept "that features a unique interactive experience that will invite the consumer to touch and learn more about Compaq products and technology."

"RadioShack enables Compaq to broaden its distribution reach into local markets through America's most trusted consumer electronics chain," says Eckhard Pfeiffer, Compaq's president and CEO. "Almost overnight, we will be able to increase our market presence by offering our products through up to 7,000 convenient locations. We believe this competitive edge will result in increased sales and brand awareness." "Compaq, the leading PC manufacturer, and RadioShack, the most pervasive retailer of electronics, are entering into a strategic marketing alliance that should be a 'win-win' for both companies and their customers," adds John V. Roach, chairman and CEO of Tandy Corp., RadioShack's parent company.

Bell Atlantic Courts Net Ruling

The Federal Communications Commission is being asked by Bell Atlantic, the nation's largest regional Bell phone company, to bar states from regulating services that let people tap into the Internet. "While the FCC has no role in regulating the price of these high-speed communications services offered by telephone companies," notes Associated Press writer Jeannine Aversa, "Bell Atlantic wants the FCC to step in to pre-empt state rules." question include special high-speed ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network) lines and a faster, lightning-quick phone line using a developing technology called ADSL, or asymmetrical digital subscriber line.

As reported earlier, all five Bells are banking on ADSL to give them important roles in the Internet business and help them compete against cable TV companies that are offering their own high-speed Internet connections. In an interview with AP, Bell Atlantic Vice President Tom Tauke told Aversa, "As we read the 1996 Telecommunications Act, the FCC would have the authority to remove high-speed services from regulation completely. In essence, the FCC would be pre-empting the states from regulating those services."

The 1996 law that deregulated the communications industries gave the FCC power to preempt state regulations that impede competition. Spokeswoman Susan Butta told the wire service Bell Atlantic is seeking regulatory relief only for itself, adding the company also wants the FCC let it build in its local phone region high-speed networks to carry Internet traffic. Aversa says Bell Atlantic has 300 customers using ADSL, which the company is testing. ISDN is available throughout Bell Atlantic's local phone region, which runs from Maine to Virginia. Of Bell Atlantic's total of 39.7 million phone lines, 436,000 are ISDN, the company said.

Amelio Joins Investment Firm

Former chairman/CEO Gilbert F. Amelio of Apple Computer Inc. and of National Semiconductor Corp., has joined The Parkside Group, a private equity investment firm. Reporting from San Francisco, The Associated Press says as a Parkside Group partner and member of the board of directors, Amelio will lead the firm's high technology financing efforts. He will focus on company buyouts and earlier-stage financing of companies.

Managing partner Barry L. Schneider says, "Gil Amelio brings Parkside 30 years of technical and executive experience in semiconductors, telecommunications and computers. As an inventor holding 16 patents alone or jointly and as an experienced chief executive officer, he adds substantially to our operating credentials and balances the expertise of our partners."

Silicon Graphics Names New CEO

Silicon Graphics Inc. has named Hewlett-Packard Co. executive Richard Belluzzo its new chairman and CEO. Belluzzo replaces Edward McCracken, who announced last October, under pressure from investors and company directors, that he planned to resign. The Reuters news service reports that the Mountain View, California, computer workstation maker has been losing market share to Sun Microsystems Inc. and other competitors. The company has been under pressure from powerful, lower-cost PCs running Windows NT. Belluzzo was an HP executive vice president and general manager of the firm's computer organization. He was responsible for HP's computer products and systems and its software and services group.

"On Thursday, Silicon Graphics began a restructuring that will start reducing operating expenses beginning in the third quarter," notes Reuters. "Last October, SGI announced plans to lay off 850 of its employees -- 250 of those layoffs were independent contractors and the rest were regular staffers. At the time, SGI estimated that it would take a charge of about \$50 million." SGI also reported a second-quarter net loss of \$31 million, or 17 cents a share, including \$53 million in restructuring and acquisition related charges, compared with a net loss of \$13 million, or 7 cents a share, in the second quarter of fiscal 1997.

Microsoft Sets Stock Split

Microsoft Corp. reports that its board of directors has approved a 2-for-1 split of its common stock. Shareholders will receive one additional common share for every share held on the record date of February 6. "We continue to hear from investors that they would like the stock price to be more accessible, and we hope this split will address that interest," says Gregory B. Maffei, the software publisher's chief financial officer.

"We're pleased that customers continue to find our products compelling and innovative, and we will work hard to continue focusing on building technologies that enhance our customers' productivity, enjoyment and creativity." As of December 31, Microsoft had approximately 1.2 billion common shares outstanding. Upon completion of the split, the number will increase to approximately 2.4 billion. Microsoft stock was trading at 140 1/8 early Monday afternoon.

3M Says New Cable Cuts Costs

3M Corp. has unveiled a next-generation fiber optic local area network (LAN) cabling system. The company says its Volition Fiber Optic Cabling System, can cut in half the cost of linking computers via optical fibers while simplifying installation and maintenance. Volitron is 3M's first complete LAN cabling system for the premises wiring market. "The Volition system not only offers the performance advantages of fiber optics to large systems users but also to smaller enterprises," says John Riccardi, Volition program manager for 3M's telecom systems division, based in Austin, Texas. "Now, users can economically and easily link computers together with the unlimited data capacity of fiber optics for

data-intensive applications, such as video conferencing, multimedia and 3D modeling."

3M claims that cost advantages accrue because once the network has been installed optical fibers never need to be torn out of the wall to upgrade system capacity. Computers connect to the system with a simple, telephone-like jack. "This means you can expand the system without rewiring and move computers around the office without calling a technician," says Riccardi says.

Use of optical fiber cabling has been largely restricted to specialized applications due to installation complexity and high cost, notes Craig Johnson, a networking service analyst for Dataquest. "The global premises wiring market is ready for a solution that will make fiber-to-the-desktop a viable option as companies upgrade their LANs." More details are available on the Web at www.3M.com/volition.

Intel Launches Faster Pentium

The fastest Pentium processor yet -- a 333 megahertz version of the Pentium II family -- is being launched by Intel Corp. Reporting from San Francisco, the Reuter News Service says more than a dozen PC makers will begin offering new systems with the chip. Company officials told the wire service the new Pentium II will be used in systems ranging from powerful workstations and server computers, to corporate desktop and consumer PCs. Previously, Intel's fastest Pentium II was a 300 megahertz version, which was introduced last year. Reuters adds, "The latest version of the Pentium II costs \$722 each, in 1,000 unit quantities."

Apple's Claris Reorganizing

Apple Computer Inc.'s Claris software subsidiary, continuing to cut costs, is reorganizing and laying off some 300 employees. Reporting from Apple's Cupertino, California, headquarters, The Associated Press says Claris will concentrate on its FileMaker Pro database software - changing its name to FileMaker Inc. -- while Apple will now take charge of Claris' other products. Claris president Dominique Goupil told the wire service, "As FileMaker Inc., we can now focus all our energies on our very successful FileMaker business.

We are totally committed to growing this business dramatically during the coming year." Currently, the Macintosh Windows compatible program sells about 3 million copies a year, AP says, adding, "Claris has developed and distributed both Claris-brand and Apple-brand programs, but Apple, starting Feb. 1, will handle development and distribution of all Apple-brand software, including the Macintosh operating system." Also, the wire service says, Apple will develop and support ClarisWorks, productivity software.

HTML Proposal Moves Forward

Microsoft Corp., Qualcomm Inc. and Lotus Development Corp. say they have received acknowledgment from the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) of their HTML Threading Proposal. The proposal outlines how Extensible Markup Language (XML) can be used to allow data-rich features in HTML e-mail applications. According to the companies, the HTML Threading Proposal lays the groundwork for HTML e-mail applications to provide rich, structured data about the conversation thread in a message and about its authors. For example, e-mail applications potentially could identify the author of each piece of text in an e-mail thread, rearrange the segments of a thread in

chronological or hierarchical order based on user preference or display text from each author in a distinct way.

The three companies submitted their proposal to the W3C for consideration as an open standard. The specification is available for public review on the W3C Web site at <http://www.w3.org/TR/1998/NOTE-HTMLThreading-0105>.

"This proposal will enable a new class of powerful e-mail features that we will support in future releases of the Microsoft Outlook client family," says John Ludwig, vice president of Microsoft's Internet client and collaboration division. "We look forward to working with Qualcomm, Lotus and others to advance this proposal through the W3C standards process."

Microsoft NetShow 3.0 Beta to Ship

Microsoft Corp. will release the first beta version of Microsoft NetShow 3.0 this week. The beta code will be given to 3,000 attendees of the Microsoft Web Tech*Ed conference in Palm Springs, California, and demonstrated at Internet Showcase '98 in San Diego. A public beta release of NetShow 3.0 is planned for release within 60 days. Microsoft claims that the enhanced software provides the highest-quality streaming audio and video over the widest range of data rates. Microsoft has also announced support for NetShow 3.0 from over 40 leading industry content providers, solution providers and independent software vendors, including Bloomberg Corp., Fox, MSNBC and Warner Bros. Online.

"Customers have told us they need to integrate multimedia content into their business applications and Web-based content," says Bob Muglia, vice president of Microsoft's server applications unit. "With the beta release of NetShow 3.0, Microsoft is delivering the highest-quality streaming audio and video and driving key standards such as the Advanced Streaming Format for content providers and developers." A key enhancement in NetShow 3.0 is the product's integration with Microsoft Office, Windows NT Server, the BackOffice software line and third-party applications. Microsoft notes that the integration will allow media providers to combine NetShow 3.0 with their own expertise in content creation to build an Internet-based media business.

Ergonomic Keyboard Ships

Darwin Keyboards Ltd. has started shipping SmartBoard, a "split" computer keyboard that's designed to accommodate the natural movements of human hands. According to the San Francisco company, SmartBoard incorporates a new patented keyboard design, called the "SmartKey Layout," that aims to make typing faster, easier, and more comfortable. SmartBoard also features a space-saving design that's 20 percent smaller than other split keyboards, a palm rest and a two-position adjustable wrist leveler. "The SmartBoard is a dramatic breakthrough in keyboard design," says Allan Lichtenberg, co-founder of Darwin Keyboards. "The SmartKey layout gives computer users the keyboard they have been waiting for -- one that is not only more comfortable, but actually makes typing easier and faster. The SmartBoard is a very innovative and exciting addition to our product lineup." SmartBoard sells for \$99.95. More details are available on the Web at

Report: Scanners Now Mainstream

A new study by InfoTrends Research Group finds that 1997 was a year of breakneck change in the scanner mass market. Almost overnight, scanners went from obscurity to standard desktop equipment. The report forecasts that about one in 14 computer users will have a scanner by the end of

1998. The speed at which prices fell took both vendors and users by surprise, states the report. On the other hand, PC-bundled scanners did not take off as expected, and sheet-fed scanners shipments slowed dramatically mid-year when flatbed pricing suddenly became very competitive. Scanner shipments topped 4 million in 1997 in North America, and the market is poised to grow another 50 percent in 1998.

The report states that the scanner market remains one of the fastest growing segments in the computer industry. The convergence of other imaging technologies will help drive growth into the next decade. In the next few years, scanners are expected to become a standard piece of equipment in every PC-equipped home, notes the study. More details are available on the Web at <http://www.infotrends-rgi.com>.

Japanese Ministry Spammed

From Tokyo comes word the Ministry of International Trade and Industry has discovered more than 200 unsolicited bulk e-mail messages clogging one of its Internet-linked computer servers. The Associated Press quotes the English-language messages reportedly had been sent from the United States and advertised an investment venture, adding, "They did not penetrate an internal system which is protected from unauthorized access." Japan's Kyodo News reports the ministry is investigating whether or not the transmission of the messages was intentional.

Russian Admits \$3.7M Intrusion

A Russian computerist has admitted he gained access to an internal Citibank computer system in 1994 and transferred \$3.7 million worth of customers' funds into accounts he and others controlled in five different countries. Thirty-year-old Vladimir Leonidovich Levin faces a possible sentence of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine when he is sentenced Feb. 24, federal prosecutors told the Reuter News Service. The wire service notes that in 1994 Citibank offered a service called the Financial Institutions Citibank Case Manager with which customers could execute wire transfers to other banks by accessing a computer network using an identification code and password combination.

"The indictment," says Reuters, "charged that between June and August 1994 Levin accessed the network by using identification codes and passwords belonging to other Citibank customers. He then executed unauthorized transfers of funds from those customers' accounts to those that he and others controlled at banks in Finland, the Netherlands, Germany, Israel and the United States." Prosecutors say Levin used the program at least 18 times in the summer of 1994 to gain access to other people's accounts.

New Excel Virus Found

Network Associates Inc., formerly McAfee Associates, reports that its McAfee Labs Anti-Virus Emergency Response Team has identified a new virus that infects Excel spreadsheets. The virus, called "XF/Paix.A," attacks spreadsheets by installing itself into Excel. "While today this threat is specific to French language Excel sheets, the potential of this new type of virus could be used to attack any language of Excel within the next three months," says Shannon Talbott, manager of McAfee Labs.

According to Network Associates, XF/Paix.A works by installing itself as an add-in to Excel in a file called xlsheet.xla. The worksheet is hidden so that users can't see it when they view all of their worksheets. The virus executes each time a file is opened in the French version of Excel.

Additionally, the virus executes whenever Excel recalculates all formulas in the document. Unlike other macro viruses, this virus specifically infests itself in the data region and executes itself as Excel goes through its calculations, notes the company.

Network Associates says it has developed a special update of its VirusScan software with an antidote for the virus. A free working evaluation version of the product can be downloaded from the Web at <http://beta.nai.com>. Network Associates has also shared the virus sample with other anti-virus researchers.

Motorola Accused of Infringement

Chip maker Motorola Inc. has been sued by General Patent Corp. International for alleged patent infringement related to four modem technology patents. Reporting from Monsey, N.Y., the Reuter News Service quotes General Patent as saying the lawsuit covers patent specific aspects of PC Card modems, the credit-card-size modems used in notebook and laptop personal computers. General Patent Chairman/CEO Alexander Poltorak told the wire service, "Motorola was notified of the infringement in 1995. We did all we could to avoid litigation."

Reuters says the lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California in San Diego. The patents in question are U.S. Patent No. 4,603,320 ("Connector Interface"), U.S. Patent No. 4,543,450 ("Integrated Connector and Modem"), U.S. Patent No. 4,686,506 ("Multiple Connector Interface"), and U.S. Patent No. 4,972,470 ("Programmable Connector").

Judge Temporarily Blocks Navy

A federal judge says sailor Timothy R. McVeigh can remain on active duty temporarily, while the court weighs the Navy's plans to dismiss him based on evidence of homosexuality obtained from his profile on America Online. The Associated Press characterizes U.S. District Judge Stanley Sporkin's ruling late yesterday as "a setback for the Navy," which argued Senior Chief Petty Officer McVeigh (unrelated to the Oklahoma bomber of the same name) had openly declared his homosexuality on the online profile page.

McVeigh's attorneys argue the sailor's full name never appeared on those electronic documents and that the Navy learned his identity only by illegally pressing AOL for what should have been confidential information. Attorney C. Dixon Osburn of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network called Judge Sporkin's ruling "the proper decision," adding, "Public opinion should be behind McVeigh on this."

The judge issued a preliminary injunction, saying essentially that McVeigh would be irreparably harmed by being discharged before the court's review of the case was complete. The Navy proposes to honorably discharge McVeigh immediately, ending his 17-year Navy career. As reported earlier, the Navy is contending McVeigh violated the "don't ask, don't tell" policy on gays in the military by posting a "profile page" on AOL that included his first name, his residence in Honolulu, his birth date and the listing under marital status, "gay." The profile page also contained references indicating a sexual interest in young men.

McVeigh acknowledged to Navy investigators that he had written the page but only after they learned from AOL the full identity of its author. As reported last week, AOL has said its employees should not have given the information to the Navy investigator, that the company had been duped by

the Navy into disclosing the data. Meanwhile, McVeigh's attorneys argue the Navy inquiry itself violated the "don't ask" portion of the policy on gays in the military, accusing the Navy of subterfuge when the Navy investigator who called AOL did not identify himself but said only that he was a "good friend" of McVeigh's.

Forum a Lifeline for Canadians

With eastern Canada battling the effects of the worst ice storm in memory, Canada (English) Forum members have used their desktop and portable computers and Csi to share their experiences, hope and fears. "I am the mother of a student living in Kingston (Ontario) and have heard some harrowing tales," wrote a member named Grace on Jan. 9. "Last night, trees were falling through the roofs. All the hotels (which surprisingly have power) are completely full and my son along with seven others (in the house he shares) are freezing. Please keep me posted if you hear of anything new."

"My daughter and her family live in Kingston," noted Wolf Braun on Jan. 10. "Their power is off at home and has been since about 10:30 p.m. Wednesday night. Fortunately, their home is on gas hot water and so have been OK." A member named Marian commented on Jan. 10 that "things are quite dismal" near Ottawa. "We've had no water or phone or power since Monday and estimates are a month before anything is restored. All the power poles are down on every rural road and they are littered with hydro lines. Apparently the government has put a moratorium on selling generators except to farmers, so many people are relying on neighbors etc. Our area has banded together to use a single generator that's making the rounds and then paying back by doing the farm chores in each others barns."

On Jan. 8, a Montreal member named Jen worried about her Quebec neighbors' safety. "What gets to me is the people who still insist on heating with camping equipment or BBQs." She also expressed concern for her favorite trees. "We have two gorgeous, huge elm trees out back. Slowly each branch is falling off. I wonder what will be left when this is over?" On the same day, a member named Darlene, also in Quebec, described her struggle. "Well, my power has been off for over 48 hours. The first night I stayed at home and froze, but last night I said enough is enough and abandoned ship and went to a hotel."

To follow the latest crisis developments, GO CDNENG and read the messages in Section 20, "Ontario," and the thread "Ice Storms In Ontario, and Section 20, "Quebec," and the thread "Ice storm stories." Many other Forum sections also contain ice storm-related threads.

Gillian Anderson Is Queen of Net

Gillian Anderson, who plays FBI agent Dana Scully on Fox television's enigmatic "X Files," has emerged as the queen of Net surfers' hearts. Cyberspace writer Chris Allbritton of The Associated Press finds by a recent count on the Yahoo search engine that Anderson has 99 sites devoted to her on the Internet's World Wide Web. That handily tops sultry Pamela Anderson Lee, former "Baywatch" star, "who has what some might consider the unfair advantage of being naked in many of her pictures," Allbritton observes. Lee has 67 websites.

Rounding out the top five, says AP, are "Batman and Robin" co-star Alicia Silverstone with 91 sites; Hanson, the three-brother teen-heartthrob band with the catchy single "MMMBop," with 67, and "Lois & Clark's" Teri Hatcher, with 53. "On the Web, you can obsess 24 hours a day," comments

media critic Jon Katz of HotWired, who adds the web is "a phenomenal medium for celebrity worship." Following is Allbritton's monster list of celeb sites, ranked after Anderson, Silverstone, Lee, Hanson and Hatcher.

With 49 to 30 sites:

The Artist Formerly Known as Prince, 46
Madonna, the material mom, 45
Alanis Morissette, 45
David Duchovny, 41
Leonardo DiCaprio, 37
Michael Jackson, 31

With 29 to 10 sites:

Claire Danes, 29
Drew Barrymore, 24
Courtney Cox, 21
Jim Carrey, 20
Elton John, 18, (eight of them dedicated solely to his tribute to Princess Diana)
Julia Roberts, 17
George Clooney, 15
Tom Cruise, 15
Nicole Kidman, 14
Fiona Apple, 13
Pierce Brosnan, 11
Janeane Garofalo, 11
Rosie O'Donnell, 11
Lucy Lawless, 11
Will Smith, 11
Demi Moore, 10

With nine to five sites:

Neve Campbell, 9
Patrick Stewart, 9
Juliette Binoche, 8
Sarah Michelle Gellar, 8
Whitney Houston, 8
Jeri Ryan, 8
Sharon Stone, 8
Uma Thurma, 8
Mel Gibson, 7
Helen Hunt, 7
Gwen Stefani, 7
Salma Hayek, 6
Kevin Sorbo, 6
John Travolta, 5
Elizabeth Hurley, 5
Kate Winslet, 5

With four sites to one site:

Helena Bonham Carter, 4
Brendan Fraser, 4
Keanu Reeves, 4
Toni Braxton, 3
Kevin Costner, 3
Ethan Hawke, 3

k.d. lang, 3
Tori Spelling, 3
Kristin Scott Thomas, 3
Mira Sorvino, 3
Tori Spelling, 3
Alec Baldwin, 2
Johnny Depp, 2
Tom Hanks, 2
Jennifer Lopez, 2
Liam Neeson, 2
Oprah Winfrey, 2
Minnie Driver, 1
Dylan McDermott, 1
Bruce Willis, 1

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A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N

FAIR? STR Focus Are the Taxpayers/Voters/Citizens Getting a Fair Deal?

Diehard Republican; Is Kenneth Starr

A Crusader for:

Truth, Justice and The American Way?

Or,

A Despicable Modern Day Inquisitor!

In HOT, if not, RABID Pursuit of a Democrat;

President William J. Clinton!

An Opinion By Ralph F. Mariano

Obsession."power to absorb one" To be "all-consumed".

One would never think that a Special Prosecutor could become "Obsessed" with an assignment. After all, they're the epitome of Judicial Professionalism. Or, are they? Take the matter of looking over the activities and maze of events surrounding Kenneth Starr. Starr, admittedly staunchly loyal Republican, has doggedly used every facet of his Special Prosecutor office attempting to hang the current Democratic Administration and President William Jefferson Clinton out to dry. to be left slowly twisting in the wind of political hot air somewhere in the wastelands of politics gone by. One thing we must all pay attention to is the time spent in Starr's aggressively ambitious pursuit of Clinton and his wife, Hillary.

From Whitewater till present, all Starr has seemingly come up are "alleged sex partners" "fall guys", "patsies", backstabbers playing "let's make a deal" and, best of all; sore losers in the brownie parade at the White House. Why is it we never saw major headlines about Dwight David Eisenhower's affair with his wartime secretary? Why is it he wasn't hammered into the ground by the Press Corps. At that time or, during his Presidency? Better yet, why wasn't his extramarital affair used against him when he ran for President? Anybody have the right answer??

How about;

- ˆ The "reporter" reporting on a politician's private life would suddenly lose access to most events involving that politician, his friends and fellow party members
- ˆ Such acts on the part of the press were simply not done as a matter of the utmost respect
- ˆ Politician's private lives were kept private as a matter of course
- ˆ Any reporter probing into a public figure's private life was destined to become unemployed

Then came JFK's Presidency. I was a young man at the time. In fact I met JFK, RFK and Teddy at a very small Airport outside of Liberty NY shortly before JFK's victory over Richard M. Nixon. While I was young and

impressionable. I'll never forget the TV coverage of Vietnam and especially the Cuban Missile Crisis. The JFK Assassination coverage, the subsequent Warren Commission findings and the years of innuendo and obvious problems with the Warren Commission's findings. Those findings left many in this country with numerous questions. One in particular, why hasn't the "ever so active and righteous" National Press Corps., both hard copy and media pursued the truth in JFK's murder? Of course, we can all look to Watergate and Richard M. Nixon ("I am not a Crook") and say here is case where the press' diligent investigation actually did uncover wrongdoing. Special Note: A special prosecutor (like Starr) was not appointed until such time as wrong doing (the smoking gun) was clearly evident.

In the matter of Starr vs Clinton. Starr was appointed to FIND wrong doing on the part of a newly elected Democratic President by a majority Republican House and Senate. Folks, it doesn't take a Rocket Scientist to realize that millions upon millions of dollars have been spent (read wasted) by Starr in his pursuit of Bill Clinton. Starr had all but given up a year or so ago. only to be re-instigated by his Republican Cronies to continue by becoming involved in the Paula Jones sex case. (an incident which by the way, occurred well before Clinton was elected President) once again though, the "special prosecutor" was sent on fact finding missions before any wrong doing is actually proven to have occurred. (Can say Inquisition?)

Now comes a new odorous fly in the ointment. Once again, the Press is gleefully jumping all over this one. A White House aid. whose actual desires and goals are high questionable, jumps up via a "backstabber" in the Whitehouse (a Ken Starr "Mole") who was admittedly "on her way out" who secretly recorded Monica Lewinsky's ramblings about sex in the Whitehouse! Incredibly, at the urging of Kenneth Starr. In all my years. I've NEVER once heard of any law or group of laws that allowed for the "breaking of laws to enforce the law". That my friends, would make Law Enforcement Officials. "law-less" IE, OutLaws. Why hasn't the press looked over Starr with his rabid Republican loyalty using "sex, dirt and money" in every way possible to get Clinton?

Recently this week.. We all were witness to the State of the Union Address. President Clinton had many wonderful things to present to the Nation. Most folks appreciated what he had to say and indeed most in attendance rose and applauded the President at every appropriate time. That is, except the dissident Republican Representatives. The very same "Gingrichites" who have, ever since Clinton's first Victory, done everything in their power and some. outside of their legal power to thwart every move, bill, decision, proposition and effort on the part of the President to do some good for this country. Thankfully, Newt & Co. have not been totally successful. The President's budget is working, the Nation's budget is close to being balanced. Inflation is in check, unemployment is at an all time low, people are making money and profiteering in not lopsided with all the major profits going to only those at the top. No thanks to the Republicans in both the House and Senate.

Those clowns (sorry to insult all the Emmett Kelly's out there) who sat on their hands in the audience during the State of the Union Address should be ashamed of themselves! How very UN-Patriotic. Better yet. perhaps each and everyone of them are in desperate need of having their private lives thoroughly examined by the Press. Not once but every day for as long as they are in office. Why is it Newt got "Off the Hook" so easily?? Why was it his "BUDDY" Bob Dole was so eager to and permitted to loan Newt the three hundred some odd thousand dollars needed to pay his fine for unethical profit taking behavior? Now Dole is a lobbyist for a

foreign nation?? Bet you cannot guess which nation?? Doing so while he holds a note loan on the head of The Speaker of the House (a possible Presidential Successor)??? What's WRONG with this picture. Easy.. The Republicans hold the majority in the House and Senate so who's going to holler "investigate" and get such an action through both the house and the senate??

The nation as a whole is obviously NOT interested in Clinton's private life. Who cares about who he is tapping and who is not on his personal, "most favored female" list if anyone beside his wife is... WHO CARES!! Ken Starr as a special prosecutor needs to have the appointment cancelled and the office closed down. It has become a national disgrace that gravely offends every responsible Citizen of this great Nation and the Constitution of the United States of America.

So let's get on to other, far more important, matters. President Clinton has Saddam Hussein to deal with. Along with France (very busy vacillating .they never worried when it came to our GI's blood being spilled to free the French of Nazi terror) worried about the money to be lost if not able to trade with Iraq and Russia, a long time ally of Iraq also not wanting Saddam put in his place once and for all. Hasn't anyone realized that if any serious hostilities erupt in the Middle East the very first victims will be the citizens of Kuwait and then without a doubt.. Israel? Meanwhile have any of the citizens and taxpayers of this country seen the dissident Republicans directly supporting the President in his confrontations with Iraq's Saddam Hussein? After all, didn't Clinton (a Democrat) inherit this miserable headache and political mess from George Bush (a Republican)? In all reality, the Republicans did not finish the job when they should have.

EDUPAGE STR Focus

Keeping the users informed

Edupage

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NETSCAPE WILL GIVE AWAY SOURCE CODE

Netscape has decided to follow and improve upon a Microsoft's practice by not only giving away its Communicator software for browsing the Web, but also giving away the source code that includes original programming for that product. One reason for the move is to encourage third-party software companies to create improvements on its products, for submission to Netscape and inclusion in the final product. A Microsoft executive derides this strategy and says that corporate companies will be reluctant to use software written by a multitude of authors; however, industry analyst Bruce Smith believes that Netscape will police the quality of the software that corporations buy and says: "It's a brilliant move. By giving away their source code, they enlist an army of unpaid developers to work on their side." (Wall Street Journal 23 Jan 98)

PC MAKERS CONTINUE OFFERING EXPLORER

Compaq, Dell and IBM say they will continue offering Microsoft's Internet Explorer (IE) software for browsing the Web, even though Microsoft has given in to Justice Department demands to make it easier to remove the software. The companies presumably believe both that customers want IE and that it would be a mistake for them to anger Microsoft. Rob Enderle of the Giga Information Group says: "Why take the risk? There's no reason to remove it unless you want to make a statement." (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 23 Jan 98)

NET REGISTRARS ANGERED BY GOVERNMENT'S DOMAIN-NAME PLANS

The international organization called the Internet Council of Registrars (CORE) is vowing to lobby against a recommendation by Ira Magaziner, the Clinton Administration's special advisor for Internet issues, to allow only one of seven proposed new domain names to be added immediately. Magaziner's recommendation also would extend the existing rights of Network Solutions Inc., which has an exclusive contract with the government to administer the ".com," ".net," and ".org" names. Don Heath, president of the Internet Society, says now that the government is involved with these issues, the situation is in "chaos." (New York Times Cybertimes 23 Jan 98)

BELLS WIN RULING AGAINST FCC REGULATION

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eight Circuit in St. Louis has reaffirmed an earlier ruling that took away some of the Federal Communications Commission's power to set prices and stimulate competition in the local phone markets. FCC chairman William Kennard says he is "disappointed that two years after the Telecommunications Act, yet another court decision will delay the benefits of competition from the American public," but of course the Bell companies are elated, and one of them, SBC Communications, says that the ruling "reaffirms that the responsibility to regulate the prices

local exchange companies charge competitors belong to the states." (Wall Street Journal 23 Jan 98)

SONY & FUJITSU JOIN FORCES TO PRODUCE LSI CHIPS

Japanese electronics companies Sony and Fujitsu will jointly develop process technology for next-generation system LSI (large scale integration) semiconductors; the companies also plan to share their intellectual property and to build a facility in Japan for manufacturing the chips, which reduce the size and power requirements of devices using them. LSI chips are used in cellular phones, CD players, and many other products. (Financial Times 24 Jan 98)

AIR FORCE THINKS PUSH-PULL TECHNOLOGY TOO RISKY

The U.S. Air Force is in the process of evaluating whether to use or ban numerous products from PointCast, Netscape, Microsoft, and BackWeb that use "push-pull" technology to manage information transfer between server and client computers. In October an Air Force memo declared: "Effective immediately, all commercially available auto push-pull data gathering applications ... are to be disabled from all networks. Currently, these technologies introduce security risks and impact data throughput on our networks than cannot be tolerated." The companies involved insist their software is secure. (News.Com 23 Jan 98)

SOFTWARE SALES SOAR

The consumer software market reached about \$5.5-billion in worldwide revenue last year, a 15% increase, buoyed by strong sales to repeat customers and well-known brands, a new study said. Home education software led all categories, with sales rising 17% in 1997, according to market researcher International Data Corp. Revenue from games and entertainment, the largest consumer software segment, grew about 15%, driven by strong demand for games that involved a lot of graphics. IDC attributed the growth in software sales to retailers that sold more titles at discounted prices to veteran computer users. Software sales during the holidays also benefited from strong brand recognition such as Mattel Inc.'s Barbie Magic Hairstyler and game sequels including Broderbund Software's Riven, which follows its best-selling Myst. (Toronto Financial Post 20 Jan 98)

WIRED MAY GET CLIPPED

Wired Ventures, the media organization that owns Wired magazine, an online offering called HotWired, and a book publishing unit, is considering selling all or part of the magazine. Although Wired co-founder Louis Rossetto vowed last month that "Wired Digital is not for sale. Wired magazine is not for sale. Wired Ventures is not for sale," he has been under increasing pressure by investors to improve the financial position of the company, which has downsized its staff from 360 employees at the end of 1996 to 250 currently. (Wall Street Journal 23 Jan 98)

"I DIVORCE THEE." CLICK.

The Israeli daily newspaper Yediot Ahronot reports that Israelis soon will be able to file their divorce papers over the Internet, to save the hours-long wait it normally takes to make filings with the rabbinical courts. However, the divorce process will still require court appearances and a waiting period before a divorce is granted. (AP 23 Jan 98)

COMPAQ TO BUY DIGITAL

Compaq Computer has made an offer to acquire struggling Digital Equipment Corp. for \$8.55 billion in cash and stock. The purchase will give Compaq entree into the high-end computing marketing, as well as access to Digital's computer service operations business for large businesses. The combined company will be poised to go head-to-head with industry leaders IBM and Hewlett-Packard: "We have now all the major pieces in place," says Compaq CEO Eckhard Pfeiffer. Compaq's strategy is also expected to give it more clout in future dealings with Intel and Microsoft: "Intel and Microsoft still have a tremendous amount of power, but this will make Compaq more equal with them," says a Dataquest analyst. (Wall Street Journal 27 Jan 98)

JUDGE SAYS NAVY VIOLATED SAILOR'S ONLINE PRIVACY RIGHTS

Blocking the Navy's dismissal of a senior chief petty officer for homosexuality (see Edupage 18 & 22 Jan 98), U.S. federal judge Stanley Sporkin says a naval investigator's actions to identify the sailor by obtaining information from an America Online technician were "likely illegal" under the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1996. The sailor's attorney called Sporkin's ruling a "milestone" for online privacy. (Washington Post 27 Jan 98)

MOTOROLA TO USE JAVA IN BROAD RANGE OF PRODUCTS

In what Sun Chief Executive Scott McNealy says is the "largest technology license agreement in the history of the Java platform," electronics giant Motorola Inc. has committed to embed Sun's Java programming language in Motorola products ranging from semiconductors, smart cards, automotive components and wireless devices to advanced electronics systems and computers. (New York Times 27 Jan 98)

AT&T SLASHES WORKFORCE BUT WON'T "TEAR UP THE COMPANY"

In a cost-cutting move, new AT&T Chief Executive C. Michael Armstrong is freezing executive salaries, shaking up the management organization, and eliminating 18,000 jobs (about 14% of its 128,000-person workforce). Armstrong says the cuts will be made mostly through attrition and retirement offers, and promises: "We won't tear up the company." AT&T is hoping to increase its capacity to carry Internet and data traffic, offer phone service over the Internet, and sell a new type of mobile phone service. (Washington Post 26 Jan 98)

REALNETWORKS REACHES FOR SUN

RealNetworks, a small company that markets software that allows users to send and receive audio, video and other multimedia content via the Web, says it plans to work with Sun Microsystems to "optimize" the latest versions of its software specifically to work with Sun servers running Solaris software. "We're aiming for a dramatic improvement in performance and scalability," says RealNetworks' CEO. "They will have the servers that work best with RealNetworks' architecture." The company will still make products that work with Microsoft's Windows NT, but the move is a surprising shift away from Microsoft, which in July paid \$30 million for a 10% stake in the company and another \$30 million to license the source code of its "streaming media" technology. (Wall Street Journal 26 Jan 98)

WEB USERS JUST WANT A LITTLE PRIVACY

A recent survey by researchers at the Georgia Institute of Technology shows that more than 30% of respondents ranked protecting personal privacy as the No. 1 challenge facing the Internet, up from 26% last summer. Censorship, which had been the top issue in previous surveys, was named by 24%. The researchers were surprised by the increase in percentage of female respondents -- 38% this time, as opposed to 31% in the three previous surveys. Responses were elicited from more than 10,000 Web users. (Chronicle of Higher Education 30 Jan 98)

CHEAPER WIRELESS WITH NEW GSM CHIP

A new chip set developed by CommQuest Technologies will give smaller cellular equipment manufacturers the opportunity to offer Global Systems for Mobile Communications (GSM) technology in their handheld and notebook systems, says industry analyst Andrew Seybold. The WorldPhone chip set, which will sell for approximately \$25 in production quantities, is geared toward handset makers that do not own their own semiconductor manufacturing capabilities, and will enable these companies to produce telephones for about \$100 -- about half the current bill-of-materials cost for a GSM handset. (InfoWorld Electric 26 Jan 98)

IT WORKER DEFICIT WORSENS

The Information Technology Association of America says the gap between the number of vacant positions for computer programmers, systems analysts and computer scientists and engineers and the number of qualified workers has widened to a 10% shortfall -- 346,000 jobs are currently unfilled. "The problem has been getting much, much worse over the last year," says the CIO at CompUSA in Dallas. "It's harder to find people, and when you get them, they stay for much shorter periods." ITAA's president says companies must consider hiring graduates with other academic qualifications or certified skills in specific technologies. "The industry can't step back and say, 'we depend on our universities to solve the problem.' That's not working now, and it's not going to work in the future." (Information Week 19 Jan 98)

APPLE TO RENAME CLARIS, CUT WORKERS

In a new streamlining effort, Apple Computer says it will cut 300 Claris employees from the rolls and rename the software subsidiary "FileMaker." The subsidiary will focus exclusively on FileMaker Pro database products. At the same time, Apple is gearing up to offer software branded under the Apple name, including Mac OS 8, ClarisWorks, Claris EMailer, ClarisDraw, ClarisImpact and Claris Organizer. According to Apple, ClarisWorks is the No. 1 productivity software used in the K-12 education market. (TechInvestor 28 Jan 98)

COMPAQ DEAL COULD THREATEN DIGITAL-INTEL PACT

Compaq's acquisition of Digital Equipment Corp. could complicate an agreement reached last year by Digital and Intel, which called for Intel to pay \$1.5 billion for a chip-making plant and production rights to Digital's Alpha processor. The deal is still under review by the Federal Trade Commission, which is already concerned that it gives Intel too much leverage in the computer chip market. Compaq's purchase of Digital would obviate Digital's need for the cash infusion from its Alpha chip sale, and Compaq has said if the Digital-Intel deal doesn't go through, it would assume responsibility for the Alpha chip plant and sell it or close it

down, according to a source close to the contract negotiations. (Wall Street Journal 28 Jan 98)

EXTENSION OF R&D CORPORATE TAX CREDIT

Vice President Gore has announced plans by the Clinton Administration to extend a \$2.2 billion research-and-development corporate tax credit for one year; the tax credit was first enacted in 1981 and has been extended eight times since then. Gore also outlined details of the 21st Century Research Fund that was announced in the State of the Union speech and which the President said will constitute the largest financing increase in the history of the National Institute of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the National Cancer Institute. (New York Times 29 Jan 98)

2000 -- THE YEAR OF THE LAWYER

It looks like the Year 2000 problem is going to be good for at least one segment of society -- the legal profession. A presentation at a recent underwriter's conference sponsored by Lloyd's of London estimated that \$1 trillion or more will be at stake in Y2K litigation. "Almost every reputable law firm has established some Year 2000 law practice," says one attorney, and computer companies that sell systems to local governments are among the first vulnerable targets, says another. (Investor's Business Daily 28 Jan 98)

EGGHEAD CLOSES STORES, MOVES ONLINE

Software seller Egghead Inc. says it will close its 80 retail outlets, lay off 800 of its 1,000 employees, and move all its operations to the Internet. The company will change its name to Egghead.com Inc. to reflect its new selling strategy. Analysts say the radical move can succeed only if Egghead.com offers very competitive prices: "On the Internet, a new price is just a click away," says one industry analyst. (Wall Street Journal 29 Jan 98)

SLEUTH FINDS PLENTY OF PLAGIARISM ON THE NET

Cancer researcher Marek Wronski used the National Library of Medicine's PubMed to find instances of 30 allegedly plagiarized medical papers ostensibly authored by a Polish chemical engineer. PubMed offers a push-button function labeled "find related articles," which uses statistical algorithms to identify root words in an article, and then searches for similar instances of the root words in other articles. Additional research by Wronski has unearthed 29 more suspect papers. The engineer, who claimed to have authored 125 articles in a 13-year career, now faces charges of plagiarism. (Science 23 Jan 98)

INFORMATION REVOLUTION

Canada will live and die by the information revolution, says a gloomy federal report that came to public light yesterday. The authors of "Growth, Human Development, Social Cohesion" say that Canada will solve long-standing economic and social problems if it manages a clean transition to the knowledge-based economy, but will come out divided if the transition falters. Their main fear is that a rise in societal inequality, stemming from the rise of computer, electronic, aerospace and other knowledge-based industries at the expense of technological illiterates, will prevent Canada from facing up to other challenges. The study paints a dark picture of Canada's present, and offers dim hope for the future. It predicts that knowledge-based industries will have a great impact on Canada's economic

and social development, adding they could help reverse the trends that brought unemployment, debt, stagnating wages and a growing inability to afford a welfare system since the early 1970s. The authors of the report warn that the transition from a resource-based economy to a service economy will be painful. (Ottawa Citizen 29 Jan 98)

MICROSOFT? OH, THAT'S JUST SOME NEW KID ON THE BLOCK.

Microsoft CEO Bill Gates emphatically rejected a questioner's suggestion that Microsoft is engaging in a dubious use of its market power when it chooses the name "Palm PC" for its design for new handheld devices. The questioner's objection is that consumers might be confused with the popular U.S. Robotics' Palm Pilot, but Gates insisted that the name simply describes the product and that the question was "beyond bizarre." "We're the new entrant," he said. "We have zero market share." (Washington Post 28 Jan 98)

CANADIAN EFFORTS TO ENSURE PRIVACY ON NET

The Canadian government says it will introduce legislation this fall to protect the privacy of individuals who conduct business on the Internet. The law, which the government wants to have in place by 2000, will also apply to other forms of computer-based e-commerce and personal data transfer in sectors under federal jurisdiction, including the banking sector. The law will try to ensure that personal data collected by businesses for one purpose are not used for other purposes without the consent of the individual, and will prohibit managers of medical databases from notifying insurance companies that a person had down-loaded fact sheets about AIDS or other diseases. (Toronto Globe & Mail 27 Jan 98)

NOVELL'S NETWARE 5.0 BETA GOES PUBLIC

Novell is making the second beta version of its NetWare 5.0 software available to the general public; the final version is expected to ship in mid-1998. The new version adds support for IPX and the Internet Protocol, allowing NetWare 5.0 to run applications written for previous versions. Users can register to receive the beta CD at for \$20. (InternetWeek 27 Jan 98)

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Kids Computing Corner
Frank Sereno, Editor
fsereno@streport.com

The Kids' Computing Corner
Computer news and software reviews
from a parent's point of view

From Frank's Desk

Next week, I'll be reviewing Diamond's Viper 330 AGP video card. I am very favorably impressed so far. The card was very easy to install and updating the card's flash ROM was unbelievably simple. The 2D performance has been astounding. This week I'll be running some 3D tests and then tying all my impressions and data together. I've always been told that first impressions are very important and the Viper 330 AGP made an excellent one on me.

Featured Review

Fisher-Price Great Adventures Wild Western Town
Windows/Mac CD-ROM
ages 3 to 7

Estimated \$20

Davidson Software
<http://www.educaton.com>

Program Requirements

| IBM | | Macintosh | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| OS: | Windows 3.1, Windows 95 | OS: | System 7.1 |
| CPU: | 486/66 | CPU: | 68040 |
| HD Space: | 6 MB | HD Space: | |
| 6 MB | | | |
| Memory: | 8 MB | Memory: | 8 MB |
| Graphics: | 640 by 480 with 256 colors | Graphics: | |
| 256 color monitor | | | |
| CD-ROM: | Double-speed | CD-ROM: | Double-speed |
| Audio: | 8-bit Windows compatible sound card | | |
| Other: | mouse | | |

review by Frank Sereno (fsereno@streport.com)

Howdy, pardners! Looking for a fun CD-ROM for your little tykes? Then mosey on down to your local software store and take a gander at Fisher Price Great Adventures Wild Western Town. It has enough action and activities to satisfy most toddlers and pre-schoolers, plus kids will learn some skills, too.

Wild Western Town is based on the best-selling Fisher-Price toy. The storyline is that Bandit Bob has stolen nine gold bars and hidden them around town. Your child's task is to find the gold bars and to capture the despicable desperado. While he searches, he can play seven activities that combine fun with learning. Deputy P.D. is on hand to ably assist the youngsters.

Navigating the program is quite easy. Simply move the mouse and watch for changes in the cursor. A dark arrow indicates that the player can leave the current scene by clicking. An open hand allows the player to pick up objects. A pointing hand shows the entry to an activity. If the cursor becomes a star, it is indicating a possible location for a hidden gold bar. In the lower right corner, you can click on P.D. to go to a town map to quickly access any activity, adjust the volume or exit the program.

In the sheriff's office, kids can get creative by making wanted posters in Wacky Wanted Posters and badges in Deputy Designer. Children can print these designs for sharing with family and friends. In the general store's Emma's Dilemma activity, children help bag groceries. The store owner will ask the kids to find a number of items for specific task and place it in the bag. This teaches children counting and to help them recognize the function of various tools and other objects. If you drop into Pepe's Piano Room, you can sing along to some famous and some not-so-famous western songs. The computer displays the lyrics and highlights each word as the Piano Room patrons sing. It's a great way for kids to learn some reading skills and to enjoy some fun songs. Another learning activity is Guest Guess. Your child must pick an item from nine that belongs to each guest. He'll have to recognize colors, patterns and categories to find the correct item.

Wild Western Town has two activities that are just for fun. In the Barrel Boot, children kick barrels at various landmarks and passing characters with hilarious results. The Town Cannon lets kids experiment by shooting a

number of characters and objects out of a cannon. You'll never know what might happen, so anything goes! Just for everyone's peace of mind, no characters are injured in the making of this computer game.

The graphics are not as good as I have come to expect. The biggest flaw was the lack of synchronization between mouth movement and the speech used in the program. Most youngsters won't even notice this shortcoming. The program's characters are well developed with distinctive voice characterizations. The music is delightful. The programmers have designed these fun activities splendidly. Davidson backs this program with a 30-day moneyback guarantee. The company also provides toll-free tech support. Such support is becoming increasingly rare these days. This combination of value and learning fun makes Fisher-Price Great Adventures Wild Western Town a sure-fire, rootin' tootin' adventure for your youngsters.

Poser 2
MetaCreations
for Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0
Estimated Retail Price \$125
Estimated Upgrade Price \$69
<http://www.metacreations.com>

Review by Donna Lines (dlines@uti.com)

Poser 2T is the easiest way to add people to your 3D scenes. Included are various body types -- male, female, child, and infant, including nude, casual dress, business dress, stick figure and mannequin. Poser 2T includes high resolution versions with superb detail for beautiful renderings.

Poser 2 comes with over 100 pre-defined poses to assist you in posing your figure naturally. These include everything from walking to surfing to karate. You can also create and save your own poses to the library. Poser 2 uses inverse kinematics - when you move one body part, the rest of body responds naturally -- lift a foot and the knee bends.

You can replace a body part with any object. For example, you can replace the arms with a gun or machinery to create a cyborg, or try replacing a human head with that of a bull to create a minotaur. The possibilities are endless!

You can easily animate your figure in Poser 2T. Version 2 lets you specify key frames, then Poser creates the action between the key frames to simulate natural movement. Save the animation as an AVI movie and open it with your favorite video application (Painter, Adobe After Effects, or Adobe Premiere).

The User Guide and the two tutorials are easy to follow. Although there are not many tools to memorize, providing pop-up or text labels for the tools would improve user friendliness. It's difficult to keep the object or body part you are manipulating selected. For instance, while trying to place hair on the head, the head or neck would become selected instead of the hair. I found the best way to manipulate the body part or object was to use the X, Y, and Z dials on the tools palette. This is not as "natural" as just manipulating the object with the mouse, but the dials are much more accurate.

There are some props included on the CD-ROM such as male and female hair,

glasses, a sword, and a few others. You can create 3D props in another 3D program and import them into your Poser scene, or purchase a software package like MetaCreations Parts & Props. You can even find 3D props for download on the Internet. Some are free while others have licensing fees.

Poser 2T is compatible with the most popular 3D programs, including Ray Dream Studio T 5, Ray Dream 3D, Detailer, and Bryce 3D, and others. Poser is also compatible with 2D paint programs such as Painter 5. Just export your Poser figure as a TIFF, or BMP, or in 3D format - Detailer, DXF, 3DS, Wavefront OBJ, and QuickDraw 3DT (3DMF).

Poser 2T is easy to learn, fun to use, and is simply the best way to get people into your 3D and 2D programs.

System Requirements:

486 DX or better

Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0

16 MB System RAM (20 MB RAM recommended)

CD-ROM drive

File Formats Supported:

TIFF & BMP with alpha channel mask

Wavefront OBJ, RIB, DXF, 3DMF, 3DS, and Detailer

Jason's Jive

Jason Sereno, STR Staff
jsereno@streport.com

Front Page Sports
Football Pro'98
Win 95 CD-ROM
Street Price: \$29.95!
sport simulation for all ages

Sierra On-Line, Inc.
3380 146th PL SE Suite 300
Bellevue, WA 98007
www.sierra.com

Sierra has released another sequel in their award winning line of sport simulations. Football Pro '98 tries once again to come out on top against a pretty stacked amount of competition this year. Fluid motion and play by play analysis are the high-points in this game. Overall, however, I was not very impressed with this football game. Here's why.

The main menu and options in this game are similar to the FPS baseball

series that I have previously reviewed. (Issue stl339) From here you can start a quick game, which takes less time to setup and can be played every time you start the program. You may also select to start or load a new season. In each season, you can control the teams in your leagues and the number of games that are played in a year. There is a lot of room for creativity when you create the league of your preference. After you have finished, you can start to manage.

When managing, players may be traded, signed, released, or do just about whatever you want them to do. You can take your favorite team and give them a roster full of Pro Bowlers so they too can defeat the Packers. (I'm a Bears' fan.) The managing system is much like that of other NFL simulations on various platforms. It is pretty easy to use, and fun to play with.

If everything has sounded good so far, hold on, this is where I thought the game went downhill. When you start to play in an actual game, you find that all of the fun things before the kickoff do not compare with the mediocrity between the inzones.

First of all, the graphics are decent at best. Although the animation for the 3D captured players and the stadium are pretty fluid for the most part, they are not very detailed. The referees that pop up now and again are seen in a movie format that is pretty good quality though. The other half of the equation, sound, is also the run of the mill. "Pops" from helmets clashing and grunts from players do not seem to delay gameplay much. Some pretty cheesy music is played through out the non-game time. One of the pinnacles of Pro '98 is the play by play analysis by CBS radio broadcaster, Howard David. He delivers his phrases with a very formal, yet appropriate type of speech. BUT, the sayings do tend to be repetitive and some times do not make sense. Example: Tyrone Hughes explodes for a gain of three yards on the kickoff return!

The camera management system which has made the FPS series stand out in previous years, just does not feel correct in a football sim. The default camera setting is a side view that resembles the scene of a nationally televised game. I could not truly feel comfortable using this angle. Many other views may be used by the player in their customized setup. However, none of the camera angles really pleased me. I could not always see my oncoming opponents.

Another time that the camera system annoyed me was when you needed to pass the ball on offense. Instead of being able to see all of your receivers simultaneously, you must toggle between them. The highlighted receiver will appear in a small box in the top corner of the screen. It is frequently difficult to see where the player exactly is on the field during this period because the range of view is so small. This was the straw that broke the camel's back for me. It was just too hard to find the receiver you wanted. By the time you did, you were sacked.

I found FPS Football '98 to be pretty disappointing overall. I really expected more from this game. I can only suggest it if you liked Pro '97, and the camera angles did not bother you too much. The price is very reasonable and a small loss if you do not enjoy the game. Hopefully next year, Sierra can improve on some of the flaws that I experienced during gameplay. The camera system was simply too much of a hassle for me. In a few weeks I will review a Driver's Ed program from Sierra that should be much more positive then this. Until then.

See you next week!

Jason

Program Requirements

Pentium 75, 16 MB RAM, 2X CD-ROM, 150 MB free hard drive space, SVGA 640x480, 256 color mouse, Windows compatible sound card with DAC

Special Notice!! STR Infofile File format for Articles

File Format for STReport

All articles submitted to STReport for publication must be sent in the following format. Please use the format requested. Any files received that do not conform will not be used. The article must be in an importable word processor format for Word 6.0 and/or Word Perfect 7.. The margins are .05" left and 1.0" Monospaced fonts are not to be used. Please use proportional fonting only and at Twelve (12) points.

- '• No Indenting on any paragraphs!!
- '• No Indenting of any lines or "special gimmicks"
- '• No underlining!
- '• Columns shall be achieved through the use of tabs only. Or, columns in Word or Word Perfect format. Do NOT, under any circumstances, use the space bar.
- '• Most of all.. PLEASE! No ASCII "ART"!!
- '• There is no limits as to size, articles may be split into two if lengthy
- '• Actual Artwork should be in GIF, PCX, JPG, TIF, BMP, WMF file formats
- '• Artwork (pictures, graphs, charts, etc.) should be sent along with the article separately
- '• Please use a single font in an article. TTF Times New Roman 12pt. is preferred. (VERY Strong Hint)

If there are any questions please use either E-Mail or call. On another note. the ASCII version of STReport is fast approaching the "end of the line" As the major Online Services move away from ASCII.. So shall STReport. All in the name of progress and improved readability. The amount of reader mail expressing a preference for our Adobe PDF enhanced issue is running approximately 15 to 1 over the ASCII edition. I might add however, the requests for our issues to be done in HTML far outnumber both PDF and ascii. HTML is now under consideration. We'll keep you posted. Besides, STReport will not be caught in the old, worn out "downward compatibility dodge" we must move forward.

However, if the ASCII readership remains as high, rest assured. ASCII will stay. Right now, since STReport is offered on a number of closed major corporate Intranets as "required" Monday Morning reading.. Our ascii readers have nothing to worry themselves about. It looks like it is here to stay.

Many grateful thanks in advance for your enthusiastic co-operation and input.

Ralph F. Mariano, Editor
rmariano@streport.com
STReport International Online Magazine

Classics & Gaming Section
Editor Dana P. Jacobson
dpj@streport.com

From the Atari Editor's Desk

"Saying it like it is!"

If there are any topics that cannot be rationally "debated", two near the top of the list have to be religion and politics. I don't even want to go near religion, so I'm going to go off-topic this week to leave an opinion on today's politics. Specifically, Bill Clinton's latest alleged indiscretion(s).

If I know Ralph, somehow he's going to have already worked this topic in his editorial this week. I'm going to take a different path, however. First off, I could care less what Bill Clinton does in his personal life, including his sex life (or lack thereof, with or without Hillary). Yes, he's the president and we'd all like our presidents to hold a higher standard of beliefs and actions in their public and private lives. While I would agree to the public portion of that statement, I can't agree 100% with the private. As long as what he's doing in his private life is legal, it should stay private.

So why the feeding frenzy? As a journalist by education, I know that this is NEWS. If Joe Schmoe from Oshkosh, USA was doing what Clinton has been alleged to have done, no one would care except maybe the townsfolk from Mr. Schmoe's hometown. It may even make his local paper. But this is the president of the United States! It's news! We may not care for it, but it's news. And from a political view, it's tons of fuel for an already blazing fire for Clinton's political opponents! Of course they're going to make sure the news stays on the front burner! Here's something that maybe they can finally use to help them sway the electorate their way in the next election. God forbid elections be won by the best person for the job! Nowadays it's who can do a better job of causing more negativity than the other! It's no longer the issues that affect the country, or you and me - it's could can cover the other with more dirt. Unless it's something being done that makes everyone in politics look good, it's all the "old boy" network and partisanship at its best (or worst!).

If you're like me, you're tired of hearing and reading about this

subject already. All I'm really interested in learning is how it will all turn out (will he dodge another bullet, or take it in the gut?). So let's forget Clinton for a minute and put it into a different perspective that we can relate to in this periodical. What if it was Bill Gates we were discussing? Or Jack Tramiel? Would we care any less, or more? My guess is that there would be some who would now be at least a little intrigued. Just like our Joe Schmoe example above, these two "luminaries" are a little closer to home and we can relate better, a little more personally. And there are still likely many of you who don't give a damn no matter who might be in the news.

Homer Simpson and Hank Hill in 2000!!

Until next time...

Press Release - Three New Atari CD-ROM Compilations

Apologies for the late posting of this item. I have been unable to access Usenet for several months.

Floppyshop is pleased to announce a "Trans-Atlantic cooperation" with Suzy B Software, America's leading supplier of Public Domain and Shareware software. The result of this will be three CD-ROM compilations of the best Public Domain, Shareware and Freeware software ever produced for Atari computers, now being made available in the UK and across Europe.

The first two titles are already completed and will be released at the Atari Shows in Birmingham and London on 18th/19th October 1997. The third title is as yet unnamed and will be available around the end of this year. All three CDs have been compiled by Michael Burkley, proprietor of Suzy B Software, probably best known as "The Unabashed Atariophile" of Z*Net, STReport and Atari Explorer On-Line.

When Floppyshop announced their first CD-ROM title, DTP+Graphics, they did not realize how large a task they were undertaking. Two more Floppyshop "branded" titles are still in the pipeline but the sheer amount of time needed to create a quality (rather than shovel-ware) production has meant these will not now appear until after Christmas. Like Floppyshop, Suzy B Software takes pride in their work, cataloguing every program on the CD. What's more "The Unabashed Atariophile" knows what he's talking about, unlike most CD compilers. Michael Burkley lives and breathes Atari, and his attention to detail rivals only our own! When selling a Suzy B CD-ROM we can be assured our customers are getting a good deal. That's why we were so keen to work with Suzy B's.

Floppyshop will handle the manufacture, packaging and distribution of these titles within the UK, ensuring their usual fast and efficient service on all orders. Suzy B Software will do likewise for North America. Distributors are likely to be announced for other European countries in due course. In the meantime, either title may be ordered directly from Suzy B's or Floppyshop for immediate despatch worldwide. The first two releases are detailed below. A further press release will give information on the third release nearer the time.

Suzy B's Atari Software Treasury #1

When it was originally released, this double CD set was hailed as the best compilation of English language Atari software to date. The downside was

the price tag at over 50 pounds. This re-release of that popular CD includes the complete contents of the original 2 disc set archived to fit onto a single CD at the much lower price of 25 pounds plus P (UK 2 pounds, Europe 3 pounds, ROW 4 pounds). Much of the software on this CD is American in origin and has never made its way onto the Internet, BBSs or PDLs. Categories include Games, Utilities, Children's Programs, Falcon software, Databases, Comms software, Screen Savers, Picture Manipulation Tools, Financial Software, MiNT Utilities, Midi Files and much more besides, with each program catalogued on the disc. An Aladdin's Cave of Atari software at an affordable price. No Atari CD-ROM owner can afford to be without it!

Suzy B's Software Treasury #2

With 9 years' service to the Atari community, Suzy B Software know more about PD and Shareware than most. This followup CD-ROM contains almost 1 Gigabyte (when uncompressed) of the very latest Atari software. The CD contains everything which could not be squeezed onto the first compilation as well as all the new software they have collected in the past three years. As with their first CD, much of the software is of American origin and has not received widespread distribution outside of the States. An absolute gold mine of top quality Atari software, this CD has the contents of over 1400 floppies! Available now from Floppyshop for just 25 pounds plus P (UK 2 pounds, Europe 3 pounds, ROW 4 pounds).

Payment should be by way of cheque or PO made payable to Floppyshop. Credit card (Access, Visa, Mastercard, Eurocard) are also welcome. Overseas customers not paying by credit card should ensure payment is in UK funds and make payment by International Money Order, cheque drawn on a UK bank, Eurocheque, Post Giro or Canadian Postal Order.

Send/Phone orders to:

Floppyshop,
PO Box 273,
Aberdeen,
Scotland, U.K.
AB15 8GJ
Tel/Fax: 01224 312756 (Intl +44 1224 312756)

For further information on these new Atari CDs, contact:

Steve Delaney at the above address

Email: sdelaney@zetnet.co.uk

or

Michael Burkley at
Suzy B's Software
3712 Military Road
Niagara Falls, NY 14305
Tel: 716 2981986 (Intl +1 716 298 1986)
Email: MRBURKLEY@delphi.com

Happy New Year from Floppyshop

Happy New Year from Bonnie Scotland (well it's a bit dull and drab at the moment, but you know what I mean!). Since last October's Atari Shows, not much has been heard from Floppyshop, so what exactly are we up to? Hibernation's out of the question, this winter's been far too mild for that, even this far north! Well, we've not been resting on our laurels for

starters! In fact quite the opposite if truth be told. I'm always reluctant to discuss new products too early but there's just so much going on that I feel it's time to let a few cats out of their respective bags. Between now and the end of April, we are planning to release Positive Image 2, a Falcon specific CD-ROM, two other CD-ROMs (one of which will be cross platform but with a strong Atari bias) and three exciting new music based products. That's in addition to the re-launch of the popular Easy Text Professional and Easy Text Pro Vector DTP packages. As the year progresses, we will continue to bring you exciting new products for your Atari computer.

I see 1998 as a year full of opportunities as far as the Atari market is concerned. Many ST owners have purchased a Falcon (new or secondhand) over the past couple of months and are ready to further enrich their computing experiences. New Atari clones (Phenix and Milan) are set to burst forth onto the market this year offering power beyond that ever thought possible for Atari machines. The Hades is becoming affordable and there's a whole lot more exciting developments going on behind the scenes. If this all sounds a bit high end, do not dismay, all (except the Falcon CD!) of our new releases are ST friendly and will push your faithful friend (the ST, not me!) to its limits. Full details of our new releases will be made as the products become available. If you are on our catalogue mailing list, you will receive these notifications automatically, otherwise they will make their way to comp.sys.atari.st and your favorite BBS. Our full ST and Falcon catalogues are available for download directly from:

<http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/sdelaney/downloads/downloads.html>

Details of the first five of these products (available now) will be posted in a few days' time. In the meantime, please remember our seasonal sale ends on 31st January 1997. Here's a quick rundown of the special offers. Please note all prices are in UK pounds. Overseas customers should make payment by credit card (Access, Visa, Mastercard, Eurocard) or in UK funds by way of a bank drawn on a UK bank, International Money order or Post Giro.

DTP+Graphics CD-ROM #25 + P&P (#2 UK, #3 Europe, #4 ROW)
CD-ROM Bundle (DTP+G, Suzy B Vol 1 & Vol 2) #65 + P&P (#4 UK, #5 Europe, #7 ROW)
EZ-Art Professional #5 + P&P (#1 UK, #2 Europe, #3 ROW)
Easy Stitch #5 + P&P (#1 UK, #2 Europe, #3 ROW)
Family Roots II #10 + P&P (#1 UK, #2 Europe, #3 ROW)
Steinberg Pro 24 III #10 + P&P (#2 UK, #3 Europe, #4 ROW)
Ten Star Games Pack #10 + P&P (#2 UK, #3 Europe, #4 ROW)
Masterplan Spreadsheet #10 + P&P (#2 UK, #3 Europe, #4 ROW)

I regret all other special offers in our Christmas catalogue update are now completely sold out.

Grab these bargains while you can and keep a look out for more exciting new developments from Floppyshop as the year progresses.

Regards
Steve Delaney

Further information:

Snail Mail: Floppyshop, PO Box 273, Aberdeen, Scotland, U.K. AB15 8GJ
Email: sdelaney@zetnet.co.uk
WWW: <http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/sdelaney/floppyshop/>
Credit Card Orderline (Phone & Fax): 01224 312756
Intl. +44 1224 312756

Electronic Cow Appoints Floppyshop as UK Distributor

Floppyshop is pleased to announce the acquisition of exclusive UK distribution rights to the entire range of Electronic Cow music products. Electronic Cow are a small English software developer dedicated to producing high quality applications for Atari based amateur and professional musicians.

Apart from a few honorable mentions in Atari Computing and the music press, Electronic Cow have gone relatively unnoticed, despite producing three impressive packages over the past couple of years. It is with this in mind that we at Floppyshop have set out to remedy the situation and make these excellent products available to the masses. Our commitment to supporting these products even extends to a free technical helpline which will be manned by Electronic Cow to answer any questions you may have about the use of their software.

The three packages in question are MIDI Arpeggiator (create arpeggio style mini-sequences or use as a live sequencing tool), Sound Chip Synth (harness the power of the Atari's soundchip for use in your MIDI compositions) and Snippet Synth (create your own library of extraordinary sounds for Cubase with this granular synthesizer). All three require a 640x400 display as a minimum requirement, so you'll need a high resolution monochrome monitor if using them on an ST. They all run in both color and mono modes on the TT and Falcon. All products are available and in stock. Here's the full feature list for each product.

MIDI ARPEGGIATOR by Electronic Cow

Program Type:- MIDI Sequencer

System: ST(FM), STE, Falcon and TT.

Memory Required: 1 Mb.

Display Type: Mono monitor on an ST. Any display type on TT or Falcon.

Price: 15 pounds

Postage: UK 2 pounds, Europe (including Eire) 3 pounds, ROW 4 pounds

PRODUCT INFORMATION

What does it do?

Use MIDI Arpeggiator to create arpeggio-style mini-sequences for use in your compositions, by saving the parts as standard MIDI files (both type 0 and 1). MIDI Arpeggiator can run as either a desk accessory or normal program, so it can be open at the same time as your favorite GEM sequencer (memory permitting). Alternatively, use MIDI Arpeggiator on its own as a live sequencing tool with its many real-time functions and play modes...

MIDI Arpeggiator's main features include:

- '• Two sixty-four step tracks, divided into four arrangeable patterns
- '• Built-in three channel MIDI mixer with two user-programmable auxiliaries (preset for GM effects reverb and chorus)
- '• Program change, volume, pan, and MIDI channel settings for each track
- '• Auto-pan, track muting, and left/right markers for looping sections
- '• Lots of play modes: forwards, backwards, ping-pong, random, and chord mode
- '• Auto-harmony part with four different algorithms
- '• Real-time input (using on-screen or MIDI keyboard) and MIDI output
- '• External MIDI clock sync (master only), and MIDI sequencer start/stop

responsive

- '• Save single patterns as type 1 standard MIDI files
- '• Record entire performances to disk in real-time as type 0 MIDI files
- '• Load and save arpeggio data from and to disk as an *.ALP file
- '• On-line help (utilising ST-Guide) and eight-page manual
- '• Free user support

SOUND CHIP SYNTH by Electronic Cow

Program Type:- Music (Audio and MIDI)

System: ST(FM), STE, Falcon and TT.

Memory Required: 1 Mb.

Display Type: Mono monitor on an ST. Any display type on TT or Falcon.

Price: 10 pounds

Postage: UK 2 pounds, Europe (including Eire) 3 pounds, ROW 4 pounds

PRODUCT INFORMATION

What does it do?

Use Sound Chip Synth to unlock the burbling sonic potential inside the ST's built-in FM sound chip, and create some rasping analogue-style noises.

Sound Chip Synth's great as a monophonic sound source in a MIDI set-up, but can equally be used as a sample generator for other software to play your burbles with...

Sound Chip Synth's main features include:

- '• Square wave oscillator (30Hz to 125KHz) with two sub-oscillators
- '• Noise generator (4KHz - 125KHz) mappable to any oscillator
- '• Oscillator volume, detuning, and octave shift controls
- '• Amplitude modulator with depth, rate, and four waveforms
- '• LFO with depth, rate, and four waveforms, and pulse effector
- '• Four-pole envelope shaper mappable to amplitude and/or pitch
- '• Real-time MIDI control, with portamento and omni-mode support
- '• Export sounds as AVR/AIFF/SPL format samples (8 or 16-bit)
- '• Variable sampling rates: 16, 22, 33, 44, 48KHz and user-definable, with digital audio playback on the STE/TT and Falcon
- '• Load and save patch data from and to disk as a *.SYN file
- '• On-line help (utilizing ST-Guide) and eight-page manual
- '• Free user support

Sound Chip Synth will run on any Atari with at least one megabyte of memory and a mono or color 640 x 400 (or better) display.

SNIPPET SYNTH by Electronic Cow

Program Type:- Music (Audio and MIDI)

System: ST(FM), STE, Falcon and TT.

Memory Required: 1 Mb.

Display Type: Mono monitor on an ST. Any display type on TT or Falcon.

Price: 16 pounds

Postage: UK 2 pounds, Europe (including Eire) 3 pounds, ROW 4 pounds

PRODUCT INFORMATION

A Granular Synthesizer - for all Ataris

What's a granular synthesizer?

Granular synthesis is a method of sound generation that uses small sonic events to create a composite sample. In Snippet, you have complete control over each sonic event (or grain), including the type, and its placement in the three axes of audio: time, frequency, and amplitude. Use Snippet Synth to create a vast library of extraordinary sounds, for use with sample sequencers, professional audio applications (like Cubase Audio), or as a source for your MIDI sampler.

Snippit Synth's main features include:

- `• Five different grain types (square, sawtooth, triangle, sine, and custom)
- `• Import AIFF or AVR samples, or any raw data to use as a custom waveform
- `• Up to five hundred grains per chunk, with four chunks per sound
- `• Mix, sequence, ring or amplitude modulate chunks
- `• Create samples up to 400,000 sample points (roughly 12 seconds!) long
- `• 20Hz to 20KHz frequency response, with pitch sweeping
- `• 20Hz to 20KHz frequency sweeps with various polarity settings and shapes
- `• Five different amplitude envelope shapes, with relative gain setting
- `• On-screen waveform display with four draw modes and color options
- `• Variable sampling rates: 12.5, 16, 25, 33, and 50KHz, with digital audio playback on STE/TT and Falcon
- `• Saves samples in eight or 16-bit AVR, AIFF, or SPL formats
- `• Alternatively, save the data settings as a *.SAP file for later use
- `• Supports MIDI sample transfer with drivers for SDS-compatible samplers, and the Akai S900/950
- `• Sample auto-crop and optimize tools
- `• On-line help (utilizing ST-Guide) and eight-page CD-booklet style manual
- `• Free user support and upgrades

Snippit Synth will run on any Atari with at least one megabyte of memory and a mono or color 640 x 400 (or better) display.

Further information:

Snail Mail: Floppyshop, PO Box 273, Aberdeen, Scotland, U.K. AB15 8GJ

Email: sdelaney@zetnet.co.uk

WWW: <http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/sdelaney/floppyshop/>

Credit Card Orderline (Phone Fax): 01224 312756

Intl. +44 1224 312756

Technical Support:- Tel: 01426 281347

Intl. +44 1426 281347

Email: electronic_cow@dial.pipex.com

WWW: <http://dSPACE.dial.pipex.com/town/terrace/abi91/cownet.htm>

Gaming Section

"WCW Nitro"!

Sega's 'Dural'!

"Rascal"! PSX Numbers!

And more!

From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

I haven't had much to say in this editorial section for quite a few weeks. The reason is simple as my real interest in console gaming lies with the Jaguar. And unless you've been living in a cave, you know that there's nothing really going on these days on this front. Sure, Battlesphere will likely make it out sometime this century; and there are a few other games in some degree of progress. But overall, the Jaguar is

"what you see is what you'll get, if you can find it."

So what's this news regarding a new system from Sega, of all people? Can Sega, who currently has the Saturn (with the success record not much better than Atari's), come out with a new system (codenamed Dural) and overcome Sony and Nintendo? Only if it comes out as the state-of-the-arts new console with tons of developer support, plenty of games available at the get-go, AND Sony and Nintendo have nothing in the wings to compete with it at the same time. If the Dural comes to fruition, it should be interesting to see what happens. In any case, the couple of articles in this week's issue makes for an interesting topic for discussion around the water cooler.

Until next time...

Industry News STR Game Console NewsFile - The Latest Gaming News!

Sega Confirms Microsoft Partnership - Codenamed "Dural"

Jan 26, 1998 (MULTIMEDIA WIRE, Vol. 5, No. 16) -- Sega's partnership with Microsoft [MSFT] to help design the game maker's next console should make developing games for the system less time-intensive and costly. Sega of Japan Chairman Isao Okawa confirmed the partnership Friday night in a speech, according to officials at Sega of America. Okawa mentioned the use of Microsoft's Windows CE operating system in connection with the new platform, which is set to hit the U.S. market next year (MMW, Jan. 12).

While the console, codenamed "Dural," won't run PC games, developers will be able to use PC code to develop for Dural, Sega officials say. It will be more efficient to develop entirely within the Windows environment, and it should eliminate the labor of converting code to other platforms, says George Metos, founder of developer Sculptured Software. "That makes any developer happy."

The Microsoft connection should give Sega a boost in its uphill battle to sell a new console in a market already dominated by Sony [SNE] and Nintendo, says Jay Smith, CEO of Wanderlust Interactive [LUST] and its development subsidiary Adrenalin Entertainment. Sega's "going to have muscle their way in." The Windows compatibility may give the Dural the chance to get in on the burgeoning multiplayer online game market, Smith adds. Sega officials decline to comment on Dural's multiplayer online capabilities.

Developers Want Cash To Support New Sega Console

Jan 28, 1998 (MULTIMEDIA WIRE, Vol. 5, No. 18) -- Sega and the entertainment software publishers who want to support its new console may have to come up with substantial capital to lure developers who wonder whether it can compete in an already-established market. For its part, Sega promises a "huge blow-out" marketing campaign, to start later this year, hyping the new platform, codenamed "Dural." Sega will commit resources to ensure Dural software sells, an official says. "We know games are the most important part of the equation."

Some developers aren't sure Sega can successfully introduce its new console next year as planned in a market already dominated by N64 and PlayStation. "Nintendo and Sony [SNE] are very, very strong," says George Metos, president of developer Sculptured Software. Sony sold 5m units of PSX

since its launch in '95 and Nintendo 4.3m units of N64 since its roll-out about a year later, according to recent data.

"I think [Sega is] going to have to offer developers enticements," including an "attractive revenue split," says Mark Kaminky, executive VP of developer Studio e. Studio e is looking at whether to develop for Dural and should make a decision within six months, he adds. Sega already offered developers one big incentive to support Dural by making development for it easier, Kaminky and Metos agree, through its partnership with Microsoft [MSFT], which should make the code to develop on Dural Windows-compatible (MMW, Jan. 26).

But that may not be enough. To make it feasible for Sculptured to invest the time to develop for Dural, instead of one of the proven consoles, a publisher would likely have to fund the title, Metos says. Sculptured has been approached by several "top publishers," but he declines to name them. And it's not just a matter of paying for development. Sega will have to commit "significant marketing money" to promote Dural titles and the developers who created them, says Mike Wilson, founder of the new publishing venture Gathering of Developers (g.o.d.), noting g.o.d. is in "early talks" to develop for Dural.

Record-breaking Sales of PlayStation Game Console

FOSTER CITY, CALIF. (Jan. 28) BUSINESS WIRE - Jan. 28, 1998 - After completion of a comprehensive analysis of its year end sales data, the PlayStation(TM) game console validated its position as the dominant leader in the videogame industry. The following is a breakdown of fourth quarter North American PlayStation brand sales:

Fourth Quarter 1997

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| -- Hardware: | 3.8 million units |
| -- Software: | 18.4 million units |
| -- Peripherals: | 8.4 million units |

During the fourth quarter, PlayStation extended its commanding lead among next generation videogame systems, outselling its nearest competitor by a ratio of 1.4 to one. Early reports on January sales indicate this gap continues to widen with PlayStation outselling its nearest competitor by approximately 2:1. As of December 31, 1997, cumulative sales since launch for PlayStation hardware, software and peripherals are as follows:

Life-to-Date (Sept. 9, 1995 - Dec. 31, 1997)

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| -- Hardware: | 8.7 million units |
| -- Software: | 47.3 million units |
| -- Peripherals: | 19.8 million units |

During the month of December alone, sales of PlayStation hardware topped an unprecedented 2.4 million units, with more than 700,000 units sold during the single week including Christmas. Total PlayStation brand revenue for the fourth quarter surpassed \$1.5 billion dollars.

"PlayStation is not only the dominant leader in North America, but is the undisputed system of choice worldwide," said Kaz Hirai, chief operating officer, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "Our phenomenal fourth-quarter sales prove two key points. They demonstrate our growing leadership in the burgeoning \$5 billion plus videogame industry and they're testament to the fact that we're continuing to increase the gap between

ourselves and our nearest competition as the most popular next generation videogame system."

"With close to nine million North American households enjoying the PlayStation game console, we've clearly established ourselves as a true entertainment option for the mass market," said Andrew House, vice president, marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "By delivering the depth and breadth of software titles that consumers want, we've expanded our user base by attracting both hard-core gamers as well as first-time users across a wide demographic."

"One of the key contributing factors to PlayStation's success has been our ability to deliver the hits, as promised and on time," said Jack Tretton, vice president, sales, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "With the abundant library of high quality PlayStation games throughout 1997, we were able to deliver the widest range of choices to consumers at the best prices all year long."

The PlayStation game console has an MSRP of \$149 with new game titles typically available at retail between \$35 and \$49. Recent software releases from Sony Computer Entertainment America include best-selling titles in a wide variety of game genres, such as Final Fantasy VII(TM), NFL GameDay(TM) '98, Crash Bandicoot(TM), Cortex Strikes Back(TM), Bushido Blade(TM) and Parappa the Rapper(TM).

"Our broad library of games and competitive pricing makes PlayStation one of the best entertainment values anywhere," said House. "Based on our unparalleled success in fourth quarter 1997, we expect to see PlayStation maintain its dominant position throughout 1998 and beyond."

Resident Evil 2 Breaks Industry Records in Debut Weekend

SUNNYVALE, CALIF. (Jan. 29) BUSINESS WIRE - January 29, 1998 - Capcom Entertainment today announced that Resident Evil 2 sold more than 380,000 units in its debut weekend, more than 60% of its initial production. Among the best selling video games in years, Resident Evil(tm) 2 took in more than \$19 million dollars, by comparison surpassing revenue for all but one Hollywood motion picture for the same weekend. Resident Evil 2 continues the story of the unparalleled game that defined the survival horror genre. Resident Evil 2 released January 21, 1998 for the Sony PlayStation. It sells at a suggested retail price of \$49.99 and is rated "M" for mature audiences.

"In three short days, consumers purchased more than 380,000 units of Resident Evil 2," said Robert Lindsey, senior vice president of sales and marketing, Capcom Entertainment. "So far, Resident Evil 2 has broken records set by some of the biggest video games in the industry including, Final Fantasy VII, Tomb Raider 2, and Super Mario 64. Success in part is due to the support we received from our retail partners.

For several retailers, this was the first time they ever participated in consumer pre-sell programs. These programs translated into record pre-orders for Capcom which could not have been achieved without their support. Our major retailers have already reported sell out situations and have re-ordered at record-breaking speed. With National television advertising for Resident Evil 2 set to break this week, demand will only continue to grow."

"Consumer demand for Resident Evil 2 has certainly finished off our fiscal year with a bang," said Dan DeMatteo, president of Babbages, Etc. "We had

a tremendous number of pre-orders for this title and sales after the first weekend were unprecedented. We have already seen an increase for memory cards and strategy guide. We fully expect Resident Evil 2 to become one of the best selling PlayStation titles of all time."

"The momentum for Resident Evil 2 has only begun," said Jim MacKenzie, senior buyer, KayBee Toy & Hobby. "Expectations were that this was going to be a record breaking seller, and we haven't been disappointed. This is one product for the history books."

THQ Ships Newest World Championship Wrestling

CALABASAS, CALIF. (Jan. 26) BUSINESS WIRE - Jan. 26, 1998 - THQ Inc. is jumping into the wrestling ring for a third time with the latest installment in the company's successful line of WCW videogames, "WCW Nitro" for the Sony PlayStation, available now at all major retail outlets nationwide. THQ shipped the highly anticipated "WCW Nitro" game despite the rival NWO's effort to deface the WCW name. The NWO organization broke into the THQ warehouse and spray-painted a portion of "WCW Nitro" boxes with "NWO 4 life." The bandits were able to deface only a small quantity before they were removed from the premises.

WCW and NWO wrestlers have been longtime adversaries, duking it out on WCW Monday Nitro on TNT, as well as on the new Thursday "Thunder" show on TBS. "WCW Nitro," developed by Inland Productions, features more than 20 WCW and NWO wrestling superstars, including "Hollywood" Hogan, Sting, "Macho Man" Randy Savage, Giant, Diamond Dallas Page, "Nature Boy" Ric Flair, as well as hidden characters from the top-syndicated World Championship Wrestling program. Players can pile drive their favorite opponent using everything from flying kneedrops to neck-breakers. Each character performs more than 30 moves, as well as his own signature moves.

"WCW Nitro" is THQ's new addition to the successful line of WCW products. "WCW vs. the World," which launched in March 1997, was the No. 1 selling PlayStation title at mall-based specialty chains during the game's debut. "WCW vs. NWO: World Tour," which launched for the Nintendo 64 game system in November 1997, set a THQ sales record. "Bringing a new WCW title to the loyal following of WCW and videogame fans is a continuation of our commitment to deliver exciting and unique games to the interactive entertainment marketplace," said Brian J. Farrell, president and chief executive officer, THQ.

"THQ is delighted about teaming with an organization like World Championship Wrestling, whose prominent and celebrated wrestlers give enthusiasts a real in-your-face videogame experience." "'WCW Nitro' is another way for fans to enjoy World Championship Wrestling," said Nicholas Lambros, executive vice president, World Championship Wrestling. "Enthusiasts can get in the ring with their favorite brawlers, creating dream match ups and set tag team rivalries. THQ understands the gaming industry and the WCW fan, seamlessly integrating the two into a videogame filled with hot and heavy, bone-crushing wrestling action."

With hi-resolution, digitized texture-mapped characters, "WCW Nitro" is the most photo-realistic, 3-D wrestling game available. The game features actual ring announcers, run-in characters and action-packed wrestling in and out of the ring. Choosing from numerous backbreaking, floor-pounding wrestlers, gamers can witness, via live-action video, each brawler's own rant.

"WCW Nitro" offers gamers one- and two-player game modes. Enthusiasts can

choose their favorite bad boy in one-player Tournament and then take on 10 wrestlers to win a title. One-player Exhibition lets gamers match their wrestler against the computer. One-player Exhibition Tag Team lets enthusiasts choose two brawlers for a Tag Team mode against any two opponents. Two-player Vs. pits two gamers against each other for the ultimate rumblefest. In two-player Tag Team, gamers pick two members of their team for the liveliest in-your-face wrestling action. "WCW Nitro" is now available at all major retail outlets for a suggested retail price of \$49.95.

Psygnosis Prepares to Launch Rascal

FOSTER CITY, CALIF. (Jan. 27) BUSINESS WIRE - Jan. 27, 1998 - Rascal(TM), the action-packed 3D platform game designed by Travellers Tales, will captivate young PlayStation(TM) game console enthusiasts with its blazing, 60 frames-per-second gameplay, a new mischievous Jim Henson Creature Workshop-created character, and attention-grabbing special effects including real time light sourcing and environmental texture mapping.

In preparation for the March 17th launch of this tightly-crafted, non-violent adventure, Psygnosis U.S. publishing is rolling out a comprehensive marketing campaign designed to give kids and their parents a tantalizing early look at one of the most technically advanced 3D platform games. Rascal will be available at U.S. retail outlets at an expected street price of \$39.95. Rascal has tremendous opportunity to lead the 8-12 year-old market, a booming new genre for the PlayStation, and thoroughly delight young gamers as it combines the mischievous, fun-loving qualities of Dennis the Menace with the adventuresome wholesomeness of a young Indiana Jones.

To reach young gamers and their parents, Psygnosis' four-month marketing program includes ad placement in network cable programming (Nikelodeon and Disney channels) as well as national network and spot TV, including key children's programming such as Fox Kids and WB Kids. This will be supported by ad placements in both enthusiast magazines and mainstream children's publications targeting 8-12 year olds with lots of game play, and other components including a wide-scale on-line campaign and a comprehensive distribution of playable demos that includes a direct mail campaign, and a retailer pre-sell program. Merchandise available for retailer use includes posters, oversized boxes and in-store videos.

The Rascal character, created in collaboration with the world-renowned Jim Henson Creature Workshop in London, is the misbehaving son of an inventor. On a mission to rescue his kidnapped father, Rascal travels through six stunningly-rendered worlds in three different time zones, avoiding fiendish traps and hostile creatures while solving puzzles that reveal hidden time bubbles, new levels and bonus games. The game features the most true 3D environments and maneuverability of any platform game for the PlayStation; nonviolent gameplay, and fast loading times for a classic cartridge feel. Game developer Travelers Tales is known for its console hits Mickey Mania and Toy Story, as well as Sega's upcoming Sonic R.

Psygnosis Runs Wide Open for Launch of Newman/Haas Racing

FOSTER CITY, CALIF. (Jan. 27) BUSINESS WIRE - Jan. 27, 1998 - If it were any more realistic, you'd be sitting on Christian Fittipaldi's lap... Newman/Haas Racing(TM) pairs America's favorite racing family, the three-time CART champion Newman/Haas team, with the spectacularly realistic racing gameplay perfected by Psygnosis, publishers of international best-selling racing games, including Formula 1 and Formula 1

Championship Edition.

The result is a motor-sports game for the PlayStation(TM) game console that pushes its limits, capturing the excitement of the CART racing series with adrenaline-pumping action and precision detail. To support the March 17, 1998 launch of Newman/Haas Racing, Psygnosis U.S. publishing is running wide open with a \$1 million marketing campaign that uses a broad range of media to put racing enthusiasts in the Newman/Haas driver's seat. Newman/Haas Racing will be available at U.S. retail outlets at an expected street price of \$49.95.

The tremendous history and legendary drivers of the Newman/Haas team, includes Christian Fittipaldi and Michael Andretti, plus Psygnosis' history with developing racing games is the basis for the themes, "We've got racing in our blood," and "A winning indy car tradition," that Psygnosis is using in its multi-channel marketing launch. The campaign runs throughout the 8-month racing season and includes a print campaign in racing and gaming enthusiast magazines; a 12-city Newman/Haas show car retailer tour, and on-site demo sampling that will begin at the start of the season in mid-March; and competitions at CART race events.

"The campaign is designed to capture the thrill of indy car racing while emphasizing a family feeling and a sense of fun," commented Munir Haddad, Product Marketing Manager for Newman/Haas Racing. Accordingly, the print campaigns focus on Christian Fittipaldi and his family to comically exaggerate the racing heritage of the Newman/Haas team. Print ads feature photographs from the Fittipaldi family scrapbook that illustrate the long-term devotion to racing. A shot of mom, dad, and the little one decorating the family Christmas tree shows all three in racing helmets with the caption, "I sure hope Santa brings us a new turbo-charger." Even the family dog gets into the act, sporting a racing helmet of his own, and the caption, "Rex, our team dog." Tag lines that run with screen shots along the bottom of the ad reinforce the family theme: "The only game designed by America's favorite racing family - Newman/Haas Racing - Welcome to the family."

Additional support for Newman/Haas Racing comes in the form a demo station in the Speedgear booth at all 14 US-based CART races throughout the season. Speedgear is the official manufacturer of licensed apparel and goods for the Newman/Haas Racing team. Retailers will have a variety of materials to select from including oversized boxes, posters, counter cards, storefront mailings, video, sell-sheets and posters.

A website dedicated to Newman/Haas Racing and developed in cooperation with Psygnosis will be released on February 17, 1998 at www.newman-haas.com. This exciting site will contain team stats, racing venues, behind-the-scenes news and current game information. Newman/Haas Racing includes 11 fully licensed CART tracks including the brand new Houston road course, sixteen individually licensed drivers, head-to-head horizontal split-screen racing with four other cars on the track, and realistic racing action with debris-releasing crashes. New features include an in-cockpit view, complete with rearview mirrors and digital gauges, motion-captured pit stops, and a unique "crash cam."

Newman/Haas Racing is the first product from Studio 33, a new development group founded by former Psygnosis director of software development, John White. The game embodies Psygnosis' commitment to producing games for the U.S. market. "Sports-oriented, and multi-player games are extremely popular with US audiences," commented Haddad. "Newman/Haas is interactive American motor-sports racing at its best."

"Fighter's Destiny" Now Available Nationwide

SAN JOSE, CALIF. (Jan. 27) BUSINESS WIRE - Jan. 27, 1998 - Ocean of America Knocks Out N64 Competition With New 3-D Fighter. Ocean of America Tuesday announced that "Fighter's Destiny," a one- or two-player fierce 3-D fighter for the Nintendo 64, is now available in stores nationwide. The title has been much anticipated since being dubbed as the best third-party game and best fighting game at the recent Nintendo Space World Exposition in Tokyo by Imagine Games Network, creators of Next-Generation Online and IGN64.COM.

"Combining a variety of characters, smooth motions, colorful settings and excellent gameplay, this title ranks at the top of N64 3-D fighters," Ray Musci, president, Ocean of America, said. "Fans will want to play for hours." "Fighter's Destiny" supports the Nintendo Rumble Pak and offers five modes of play: Vs. Com, Vs. Battle, Record Attack, Master Challenge and Training mode. The title has a unique point-scoring system and offers several innovative features including the ability for a player to gain or lose specific fighting skills through combat and a battle against the clock in a race to victory. The game even pits the player vs. a mad cow with a bad attitude. "Fighter's Destiny" for the Nintendo 64 is now available at retail outlets nationwide, including Best Buy, Electronics Boutique, K-Mart, Target, Toys 'R' Us, and Wal-Mart, at an estimated street price of \$59.95.

Konami of America: Nagano Winter Olympics '98

JAN 29, 1998, M2 Communications - Konami's Nagano Winter Olympics '98 Allows players to experience the thrills, chills and spills of the 1998 Olympic Winter Games. Konami of America, Inc., the leading developer of electronic entertainment for the home video game and coin-op markets, announces the shipping of Nagano Winter Olympics '98, an official licensed product of the 1998 Olympic Winter Games for Sony PlayStation and Nintendo 64.

Nagano Winter Olympics '98 features the major winter sporting events with ultra-realistic, 3D-texture, mapped, polygon athletes that provide the feel of the '98 Olympics. Games featured include Alpine Skiing Downhill, Alpine Skiing Giant Slalom, Speed Skating 500m, Curling, Free Style Aerial, Ski Jump 120m, Bobsled, Luge, Snow Board Giant Slalom, Snowboard Half Pipe, Ski Jump 90m and Speed Skating 5000m. Each event is modeled exactly after the real Nagano competition.

"Konami is honored to offer this exciting athletic challenge," said Mark Porwit, vice president, planning. "Nagano Winter Olympics '98 captures the spirit and emotions that come with the high-level of competition found in the Olympic games. We know that sports fans will enjoy the events found in our latest title."

Randy Severin, senior product manager, notes: "Nagano Winter Olympics '98 is the ultimate video game for fans of all winter sports and the Olympics. It's the type of game which lures players to get completely involved from the time they turn it on and has the addictive gameplay for which Konami is known."

Beast of the East Meets Best in the West

NEW YORK (Jan. 29) BUSINESS WIRE - Jan. 29, 1998 - 3D Realms 'Duke Nukem'/'Shadow Warrior' Double Pak a Deadly One-Two Punch. It's a

full-metal marathon as GT Interactive Software Corp. announces the ultimate 3D shooter tandem, Duke Nukem: Atomic Edition and Shadow Warrior, together in East Meets West. Available in March at retailers nationwide, East Meets West offers consumers two premier first-person action games for the price of one.

"East Meets West is the ideal package for any fan of 3D action games as it offers two extremely popular and great-playing games for the price of one," said Holly Newman, vice president of Marketing for GT Interactive. "When it comes to multiplayer mayhem, the attitude and action of both games are nearly unparalleled in terms of sheer fun and excitement, and that excitement is enhanced with 3D Realms' powerful level editor, which is included free with the games."

In East Meets West, The King of Carnage, Duke Nukem, must save Los Angeles from a terrifying alien invasion while Lo Wang, the Disciple of Destruction, returns to the land of the rising sun to put the lights out on his former employers. East Meets West also includes a powerful level editor, a tool that enables players to create their own Duke Nukem and Shadow Warrior levels which can be uploaded to the Internet and shared with friends anywhere in the world. George Broussard, head of 3D Realms, adds, "There is no deadlier or more outrageous pairing of PC bad boys than Duke Nukem and Lo Wang. East Meets West is a terrifically fun way to offer fans of action gaming two great-playing games for the price of one." Available in March, East Meets West carries an expected retail price of \$49.95.

Virtual Pinball/Video Arcade Games

Here is the basic patent info from the U.S. Patent Office abstract (poster has deleted a lot of the references to specific attorneys, referenced patent numbers, etc.):

Patent no. 5,700,193

"d'Achard Van Enschtut

Dec. 23, 1997

Virtual pinball/video arcade games

Inventors: d'Achard Van Enschtut; Johannes F. M.(Eindhoven, NL).

Assignee: U.S. Philips Corporation (New York, NY).

Appl. No.: 623,646

Filed: Mar. 28, 1996

For use in multimedia or other environments, a virtual pinball/video arcade game displays one or more computer-generated runner elements, runner inject elements, and runner interactivity elements. It has a programmed computer for simulating movement of the runner elements. This is interfered with by mechanical interactions between said inject and interactivity elements, the simulated movement of the one or more runner elements, and user actions on a user interface. In particular, the computer is furthermore connected to the housing as part of the user interface. A feedback actuator is controlled by the computer for imparting low-frequency primary physical interactions to the housing as a reaction on selected ones of the simulated mechanical interactions."

The entire patent document has to be ordered from the U.S. Patent Office, The fee schedule and order info are available online at:
<http://www.uspto.gov/go/ptcs>

PEOPLE... ARE TALKING

Compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@streport.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Another week has come and gone and it's now time to take a look at what's going on in the Atari community. As time goes by it's becoming a smaller and smaller community. There's no denying that. But the people who are still members of that community are happy with what they have, and happy to share all that they've learned along the way.

Many people will tell you that the fact that Atari is no longer making computers means that it's time to move on. While the fact that the company is gone does tell us that times are going to get harder and harder, it doesn't mean that our computers all of a sudden became useless.

I still use my Atari productively every day. The trick is that we have to dig a little deeper, understand a little more, and have a bit more patience. This short list spells doom on the PC platform. Most people who use computers with a Microsoft operating system are not 'computerpeople'. They simply use a computer to do the things they like to do. And that's... okay.

The bottom line is that you can still use your Atari productively and even do things that make run-of-the-mill PC users reach slowly down to lift their jaws up off of the floor. Everything from Desktop Publishing to Web Page Publishing is possible on your machine, and PC users have a hard time fathoming that.

Really?? Who..... praytell, might one of those PC Users be???? rfm

Well, let's take a look at what's going on over at Delphi.

From Delphi's Atari Advantage Forum

On the subject of SyQuest's EZ230 230 meg removable hard drive,
Bob Matiska asks:

"Just \$99 for that baby? I remember when external floppy drives were more than that! Holy cow! But that's progress, thankfully."

Greg Evans adds his question to Bob's:

"How much do the EZ carts cost? Just curious, is the face plate grey or cream/white?"

Bob Trowbridge tells Greg and Bob:

"The EZ Flyer 230 is grey all over. It has brown rubber feet, if you want to set it on its side."

As far as cost, I am still looking for a local source.
Circuit City, Office Max, Office Depot do not carry it. I

just sent off email to another local club member asking if she knows of a Kansas City Metro source for them. The EZ 135 carts are \$19. (Which the 230 can both read and write to!). If nothing else I may snatch one of those so I can rotate backups."

Michael Burkley of Suzy-B's Software posts:

"...Just tonight my Windoz computer crashed on me again. I can't access any of the drives using the mouse. Most of the programs (with icons on the desktop) won't run either. The interesting thing is that GEMulator still runs (that's what I'm using now) and allows me to access all of the hard drives! Gee, even on a Windows machine TOS performs when Windows doesn't!"

"Turbo" Nick tells Michael:

"Somehow I'm not surprised. I hear more 'horror stories' about Whinedogs '95 than any other desktop/personal computer OS (except maybe MacOS; well, my good friends Larry and Lindalee installed a new version of MacOS on one of their Macs and the printer driver went away [and they had a heck of a time fixing it]; on the other one, a bad copy of MacOS caused the machine to lock up so bad that Linde had to take it in for repairs...).

Let me know about the drive. My user group's ST Librarian (Rory McMahon, who moved back to Chicagoland from Arizona this month - long story) happens to work at a computer store and knows more Atari users than I ever will, even though I'm the President of our group! 8-) He thinks he can get me a 2GB drive that's only a few months old for about \$160, but he has to check... Hey, I can be patient - one EZ135 disk will give me enough extra space for a while (it's just that I don't trust removables to be spun up all the time, and if I boot the TT with it spun down I need to boot it again after spinning it up... not even ICD Pro's RELOG.PRG helps, only a reboot... but I've been over all that before."

When someone asks about how to get to a Delphi member's home page, Dana Jacobson tells them:

"A lot of the users here have webpages via Delphi. The good thing to remember is that the web addresses are easy to remember. All of the urls start off with: people.delphi.com Just add /username and you'll be able to find them (if they have one)."

I jump in and tell Dana:

"Actually, Delphi has another setup going now at members.delphi.com that is set up by answering questions and supplying graphics and text files... sort of like the web page designers for the ST. The downside is that you are somewhat limited by what the program itself can do.

I believe that you must have a GatesPuter in order to take advantage of this service, so there won't be many Atari-only folks in 'members'."

Dana replies:

"Yes, but I believe that this is in addition to the "people..." address. I also think that one address will get

to the other, but not sure. Gordie may be able to elaborate more."

The aforementioned Gordie Meyer tells Dana:

"Actually, the two member homepage servers are being combined. people.delphi.com is for Delphi members who actually pay for their accounts. members.delphi.com also includes the Web Forum members who have free accounts, but somewhat limited privileges (minimal webspace, no telnet access, no access to Delphi's mail server).

I'm not clear on all the details of what's going to happen, but I do know that ftp access will be available. When I hear more, I'll be sure to pass it along."

Michael Burkley tells us about the new Suzy B's CD:

"...the Suzy B's CD's are available right now. They are full of ZIP compressed files, just about as much (perhaps a bit more) than our original 2 Disk uncompressed CD. It's almost all new stuff (with some of my favorite files included and occasional overlap due to my not remembering -everything- on our first CD!). I've also included uncompressed versions of the animation, picture, and some text files.

The normal cost is \$30 but I am selling it to Delphi users ('till Feb. 15th) for \$25. As always shipping is free (though if you wish second day Priority Mail add \$2).

We also have re-compiled the original 2 disk Suzy B's CD in compressed format (now one CD). The cost for that is \$30 as well, though if you want the original two disk uncompressed version we are selling that for \$20. If you get both the new and the old CD we will sell that for \$42.

I've been really lax on marketing this! I've just been so busy."

Tony Greenwood, aka STOSSER is...

"Desperatly seeking TT Owners who also own an ST or STE and can run there TT in ATARI low resolution and have use of a Joystick,

This is to test at least one game (If succesfull then more will be converted) for TT Compatibility, however you should also be able to see the same game on a ST Computer, thus enabling you to compare performance,

Can you help, I asked in usenet and other forums, Now here, Surely theres some TT owners who want games to add to there collection?

email : paxton@zetnet.co.uk (Tony Greenwood)
or check my software out at
<http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/paxton/stosser/home.htm>

I can't support the TT unless I get testers!"

Al Horton posts:

"Just when you thought it was safe to be on Delphi.... HE'S BACK!!

Been awhile since I've been Delphi so I thought I would sign on for awhile and see if I can annoy the heck out of everyone..grin

Wanted to say Hi to everyone and to also THANK everyone for all the cards, letters, Email, and support you showed myself and my family when serious health problems struck us. Meant alot to all of us; more than words can say.

Anyhoot... I'm here and ready to "git down and talk 'tari" with everyone.

And... (and you thought you'd escape without a commercial interruption).. I have decided to re-open The Computer Dungeon. Yep, we're back and ready to help you with all your Atari needs. Stop by our website for more info:
<http://www.mcs.net/~isis/dungeon/dungeon.htm>"

"BlackJ" asks:

"Are there any Cab Specific tags I can or shoudl add to my home page? I've made a lot of improvement, but probably not enough."

Greg Evans tells BlackJ:

"I don't think there's anything CAB supports which Netscape or IE don't. Even if there were, it's not a great idea to use browser specific features in your code. I know Netscape and IE people do it with Java or JavaScript or some browser specific extensions, but it's not considered good form."

Joe Villarreal posts:

"I've been having some problems with the versions of the Cab overlays higher than 1.2619. I am using Cab 2.0a on a TT with 4 megs of ST and 4 megs of TT ram along with a Nova VME Plus graphics card.

On some web sites, the Stik homepage as an example, I get an error at a certain offset address when I do a reload; although if the page loads from the drive I don't have the problem. Whenever I get the error, Cab exits to the desktop. It doesn't happen on all web sites, but enough for me to want to use version 1.2619 most of the time. It even happens with the latest 1.2805 version of the overlay. I get the problem with either Stik or Sting.

I'm wondering if anyone else is having this problem. Could it be that the newer versions of Cab don't have this problem?"

Jim Collins of chro_MAGIC software tells Joe:

"Concerning the "error at a certain offset address" when using CAB with an overlay newer than 1.2619... I used to have that problem when I was using Cab 2.0 - but it happened less frequently than you describe.

With Cab 2.5 (on a 14 meg Falcon with MagiC, NVDI, and Sting) I rarely see any problems. The only one I can think of as being recurrent is at the Dejanews site. When I select the "follow thread" option and Dejanews returns a "thread

damaged" message, something goes whacko with my system. It's like the AES went wild as the dialog and drop down text become HUGE and unusable. I have to completely power down and reboot.

Anyway, that has been my experience, your experience might be different due to different hardware, etc."

Joe tells Jim:

"I've always had problems with Dejanews using the newer versions of the overlay. Cab exits to the desktop whenever I try to do a search for a newsgroup. I also have the same problem on Yahoo. I'm going to upgrade to the latest version of Cab one of these days."

Jim relpies:

"The only problem I have had with Dejanews is the one I talked about a few messages back (the system goes whacko on the VERY RARE occasions that Dejanews reports finding a corrupt thread in the message base).

I recently installed the 1.2805 overlay and haven't had any problems yet. Of course, I have NOT come across a corrupted thread message to see if the bug still exists. Anyway, I'm not even sure the bug is in the overlay file. It could be in any of the software (Sting, Cab, the ovl, etc).

If you use CAB a lot, the upgrade to 2.5 would probably be worthwhile. It does seem to run smoother than the older versions. I wish the newer versions would make their way into an English Language release.

Bob Trowbridge asks:

"Does anyone else use Delphi as your ISP? I am still planning on moving from STIK to STING and was wondering if anyone has a STING for DELPHI config."

I tell Bob:

"I do, on occasion, use Delphi as my ISP (using STinG for a PPP connection).

I've been planning on uploading the dial.scr file, but wanted to also upload the latest versions of the various STinG modules.

It seems that every time I get ready to upload the STinG files, Peter Rottengatter updates one of them and I have to go and get it.

I'll upload my dial.scr file now and put the most recent STinG files up in a day or two (if they're not already here)...

By the way, I forgot that there was a script here already. Jim Collins of chro_MAGIC Software was kind enough to share his script quite a while ago."

Jim Collins tells Bob:

"When I first started out with Cab (before it was commercial), I used Stik to access Delphi for my Internet

connection. Since STing has provided working PPP connections, I switched to a local ISP. I never tried to set STing up with Delphi."

Rob Mahlert tells Joe:

"I have the same problem on my TT. I usually delete the Cab Cache and the problem goes away. It's like the Cache info somehow gets messed up."

Okay folks, last thread for the week. Here goes...

I ask:

"Has anyone had any luck in accessing pages at either people.delphi.com or members.com over the past few days?

I've been unable to reach any of them via CAB since Saturday. I keep getting that most frustrating of all errors, '404', which says that the page, file, or script cannot be found on the server.

I know the darned thing is there because I can see it with Lynx from the Internet Forum.

I've also tried several other pages... Dana's, Greg Evans', and others who I know have pages either on 'members' or 'people'.

I've corresponded with member services and they acknowledge that there has been a change of server software, but cannot find anything that may be causing my problem.

If you get a chance, browse around and see what you find. If you have problems, send email to service@delphi.com and address it to Ron.

I don't know if it's necessary to earmark it for Ron, but both pieces of email I gotten back have been from him."

Greg Evans tells me:

"I had the same problems accessing the Delphi member's web pages recently. I just figured there were server problems."

I tell Greg:

"Thanks. At least I know that it wasn't just me. <grin>"

Greg tells me:

"Uh... It was just you! <grin!>"

Heh heh heh. What a kidder. Gordie Meyer (a slightly more authoritative source) tells me:

"It's likely something specific to how CAB works. They did combine the two servers (members and people) onto one machine, and pointing at members is the same as pointing at the web subdirectory on people. (And you can now FTP files into your webspace. Check the help file within the WS/WEB.)

I'll see if having the browser tracked (the stats on the web server can be broken out by browser used) will indicate where the problem may be arising. If there's a way to capture a log file of just what CAB is doing, that might help Ron and the tech staff."

I reply to Gordie:

"I don't know if the tech staff figured it out, or if the new CAB.OVL file corrected the problem, but I'm up and running again.

At first, I thought it was because I had done something wrong when I was 'publishing' pages. But that wouldn't account for my inability to access any of the other pages on members/people.

Ron asked for the specifics of my setup (computer model, OS, bro etc.) and I gave him the information, but also said that I doubted that they would be of any help to him. As hard as I try, I can't imagine Delphi having an ST and CAB to test their new system with. <G>

Ron did say that while he was looking for something that might explain it he found another problem, so perhaps I helped users of other platforms in the process too. <g>

It just seemed odd to me that even after dumping my DNS and WWW caches the server seemed unable to find the files I was typing in (I remember the names of most of the HTML pages and the graphics I used so I tried calling up some of them).

Immediately after installing the new overlay file, I was able to connect up and access all the pages I had been unable to access since the changeover."

Well folks, that's it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

EDITORIAL QUICKIES

Old Folks Are Worth A Fortune

Old folks are worth a fortune: With silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys, lead in their feet and gas in their stomachs. I have become more social with the passing of the years; some might even call me a frivolous old gal. I'm seeing five gentlemen every day.

As soon as I wake, Will Power helps me get out of bed. Then I go see John. Then Charley Horse comes along, and when he is here he takes a lot of my time and attention. When he leaves, Arthur Ritis shows up and stays the rest of the day. (He doesn't like to stay in one place very long, so he takes me from joint to joint.) After such a busy day, I'm really tired and glad to go to bed - with Ben Gay. What a life!

P.S. The preacher came to call the other day. He said that at my age I should be thinking about the hereafter.

I told him I do - all the time. No matter where I am - in the parlor,

upstairs in the kitchen or down in the basement - I ask myself, "Now, what am I here after?"

anonymous

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